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SPIRITUAL, ETHICAL AND HISTORICAL
DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED UNDER INSPIRATION,

BY

W. J. COLVILLE,

IN

BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON,

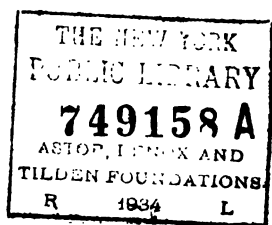
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THE LIVING TEST OF TRUTH.

W. J. COLVILLE'S INAUGURAL INSPIRATIONAL LECTURE IN
BERKELEY HALL, SUNDAY, OCT. 11, 1885.

"And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this do I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."—I Kings, XVII. 24.

WE have read this morning the chapter from which the above words are taken, deeming it peculiarly applicable and appropriate to the line of thought which we desire to set in motion at the outset of our present season's work in this city and this hall.

We are living in most peculiarly excited and exciting times and in the midst of turmoil and perplexity. On every hand a new light is breaking, surely even though slowly, upon all sorts and conditions of persons and institutions.

This is emphatically an age of trying and testing. Every one demands a test of some kind to prove his neighbor's trustworthiness. Mere assertion will not any longer suffice to satisfy inquirers; they must have proof, evidence, demonstration.

The reign of authority is ending; the age of monarchy is rapidly giving place to the age of republics and democracies the world over; and it is therefore but natural that the very words "king" and "kingdom" should be growing increasingly distasteful to lovers of freedom all over the earth.

But while the tendencies of the present age are emphatically leveling tendencies, we must not forget that two kinds of leveling are possible, the one being leveling up, the other leveling down.

It is for all reformers to see that they are leveling up the masses of mankind by their teaching and influence,

otherwise their views of equality may be terribly erroneous and their interpretation of the rights of man degrading instead of elevating.

The American declaration of independence declares at the outset that all men are born free and equal. Harriet Martineau said all men are equal in their birth and in their death. Such utterances as these are universally applauded, and endorsed without question by a very large section of modern society.

That such phrases contain a deep undercurrent of truth, and they are very necessary as means of putting down the unlawful authority of the few over the many common to absolute despotisms, one cannot deny; but that they are correct in the superficial sense in which they are often understood we cannot but deny, as human experience to-day as in the past proves the inequality as well as teaches the equality of man. Equal rights, equal liberties, do not appertain to all in one sense, though they do in another.

All have not equal power or ability, and therefore all are not equally able to avail themselves of man's rightful heritage of unrestricted liberty to unfold his nature to the utmost limit of his being. Liberty in social, communal, family, national life cannot possibly be synonymous with unrestricted license.

Robinson Crusoe alone on an island would certainly enjoy an immunity from restraint impossible to one who forms a part of society in any city or community or who is a member of a family or a society.

Absolute isolation from one's kind certainly enables one to gratify one's every propensity to the fullest degree without injury or annoyance to anybody, and as to injure another is to commit sin, and as trespass upon another's liberties is an offence against humanity, the very blessings of civilization, the very delights of home, our most sacred relations with one another, all tend to develop within us a self-abnegating regard for the welfare of the race of which we form a part, and to destroy that

dominant and aggressive individualism which could do no mischief on a lonely island where the solitary occupant was monarch of all he surveyed. But even on the lonely island man could not shirk all responsibility; he would even there be surrounded with hosts of beings though invisible to his mortal eye. Even there he would sustain relations to the universe and be compelled to submit to the laws of the Eternal Being; for in no solitude could practices be indulged which are in themselves inimical to human welfare without suffering and decrepitude following in their train.

Everywhere man is confronted by a Power, a Force, a Law, an Energy, a Will, infinitely beyond himself; that law operates in all the elements and through all agencies, it is indeed that perpetual reminder of the Infinite Spirit's presence everywhere which led the author of the 139th psalm to pen that wonderful composition which must in every age and every country awake responsive echoes within every reflective mind. Ideas of Deity change, but only to improve and to enlarge; ideas of responsibility and duty change, but only to grow diviner and clearer, as age by age man's moral sense unfolds. Religions change, but only to become purer and more helpful to mankind.

Truth appears to vary, but only looks different from different points of view, for truth is like the mountain which will not go to Mohammed, but invites Mohammed and every other traveler along the road of life to draw nearer and nearer unto it.

Many persons affect to ignore and even to despise everything that can possibly be called religious, because, say they, the very word "religion" is derived from the Latin *religio*, which signifies to bind, and we desire before all things perfect liberty. There is much plausibility, but very little sound philosophy in such reasoning, as real freedom is so utterly distinct from lawlessness or license that it may be truly termed antipodal to those causes of anarchy and confusion. Order is heaven's

primal law, discipline is everywhere enforced, laws of nature exist which no human power can set aside, and in a universe governed by law man's happiness can never consist in rebellion against the law, but only in perfect love and understanding of it and obedience to it.

We are not fatalists or stoics, we are not among those who bid mankind to be reconciled to the inevitable ; we do not feel ourselves the playthings of relentless, unconscious force which possesses neither intelligence nor emotion. We may say with all humility that in our study of the universe we have found God, not to perfection indeed, but sufficiently to enable us to rely with perfect confidence upon Infinite and Eternal Justice, which to our conception may be likened to a perfect sphere, divisible into the hemispheres of Love and Wisdom. The Eternal Power which presides over and works through all things we cannot define or limit either as an abstraction or a person. Abstraction is too vague and too unreal, personality seems dwarfed and limited. We are content to rely upon such spiritual consciousness as we possess without entering upon labored arguments to prove the existence of omnipresent Deity.

Argument is unavailing, as all spiritual revelations are discoveries, and discoveries are only possible to those whose unfoldment enables them to realize the existence of realities which though equally near to others are hidden from them as sounds are hidden from the deaf, and colors from the blind.

We agree perfectly with those who declare that God must ever be an Unknown God, if his attributes be foreign to those of humanity ; it stands to reason that if there is one Being, or if there are orders of beings in the universe, who in no way resemble ourselves they may have no points of contact with us that we can discover or understand.

An increasing revelation of color is always possible to persons whose eyesight is improving or who are being constantly supplied with aids to vision but if there be

colors, and there are doubtless many, which are caused by vibrations which produce no impressions upon our eyes either with or without the aid of instruments, these colors must be a portion of the unknowable to man. The spectroscope used so extensively by astronomers in determining the condition of other worlds than this can only point out the proportions in which elements appear on other planets which have counterparts on earth. Spectrum analysis utterly fails to give even the slightest information concerning substances which are not analogous to something which helps to form this earth.

Apply this rule to man's spiritual discoveries and you will see at once how perfect is the analogy between man's moral and intellectual acquisitions. Physical perceptions, powers of mind and moral sensibilities alike increase.

The early Bushmen were physically almost as obtuse as they were mentally and morally. The most primitive tribes of savages are very low down in the scale every way, both as regards physical, mental and spiritual perceptions, and therefore the history of human achievement in art, literature, politics, sociology, science and religion has been in all ages a progressive history. Evolution is just as manifest in languages, arts, customs, science and religion as it is in the order or sequence which the natural sciences make plain to the observer of the methods of ascension whereby the gelatinous masses of scarcely conscious existence which constituted the rudimentary types of life, the far back ancestors of man, were through æons of progress at length removed to give place to the highest type of existence imaginable on earth, the human.

The instinct of worship is as natural as the desire to eat, sleep, or walk. Phrenologists assign to the organ of veneration a place, and that by no means an unimportant one in the coronal region of the brain. Alimentiveness is an indispensable organ so far as man's physical development is concerned. Veneration holds an equally necessary position in the group of moral faculties.

Veneration or reverence is necessary to progress. We must admire and aspire to communion with what is superior to ourselves in order to arrive at a height of spiritual attainment not yet reached by us.

Love and fear are naturally present in the earlier stages of the development of this faculty only because in an inferior stage of growth man is subject to the sway of forces and creatures which are anything but kind and lovable.

It will well repay us if we take the trouble to carefully trace the growth of religious ideas; comparative theology or a study of the origin and development of religious ideas being always calculated to render us invaluable assistance in our endeavors to account for the strange and harrowing superstitions which have overrun the world almost universally. Many forms of worship appear to us detestable and degrading to such an extent that if we had no satisfactory means of accounting for their presence in the world they would indeed impair our faith in infinite goodness, and cause us to feel afraid lest if after all the universe be not controlled by a spirit of cruelty and darkness.

It must have struck every one of you, how large a portion of mankind have idolatrously worshiped fierce and vicious creatures, savage beasts and huge reptiles. For instance, what can be more repulsive to a person of delicate nerves and refined sensibilities than a rehearsal of many acts of religious worship which to some extent are still common to many countries, though by no means as prevalent as formerly. In the light of our present view of these subjects we see nothing to surprise us or to cause us any alarm in these revolting exhibitions, though we should certainly do all in our power to put a stop to them if we were called to act in any connection with them. They are the natural concomitants of blind animality and originated in the fact of men when wholly on the animal plane, being subjected to the influence of the most direful calamities, the prey of savage beasts and venomous

reptiles; they naturally feared and endeavored to conciliate the creatures whose victims they were.

Physically considered man is a very inferior and defenceless animal. How can he without sharp teeth, venomous sting, cruel claw or great size and strength, do battle with the myriad adversaries he must encounter, particularly in tropical climates, on every hand? If man be only an animal, he is to be pitied more than all the tribes of earth and air and sea, so utterly is he at the mercy of relentless persecutors who will soon extirpate him and rule the earth as they ruled it before his advent.

But man's marvelous superiority to every other order of being on the planet is in no way more singularly marked than when we consider his wonderful dominion over every noxious and terrible creature. Mammoth animals and gigantic reptiles, no matter how well armed for defence, must all flee from before the face of man who is at once their giant and their pigmy king. Small in body, weak in all physical directions as compared with them, unable to take refuge from their pursuit, either in the air or waters, he bids them depart and they fly before the weapons by means of which he compasses their destruction.

Lion, bear, tiger, jackal, serpent, ye who were once divinities are now slaves, ye who once called forth the homage of millions are now at the mercy of the race who once adored you, for ye have not those only enduring weapons of defence which man exerts for your overthrow, — superior intellect and sovereign will.

Can the Anglo Saxon invader of the Indies bow in prostrate adoration before the creature whom he can chase and slay? The instinct of worship always manifests itself in the upward rising of the mind; so long as man's physical nature was the only part of him that had unfolded superior bodily strength, greater cunning and ability to destroy constituted sovereignty, and on that plane of his development his wish to placate the wrath of revengeful animals was only a natural display of the universal instinct of self-preservation. Ages rolled by and the human

mind, the reason, the intellect, began to show signs of ascendancy over matter; in its earlier stages intellect is not kind, it is cruel as steel, and hard as stone, but it has power to resist and finally to overcome the animal.

Mere intellect is not virtue, moral greatness or spirituality, but it is a force before which all mere animalism can be made to completely surrender.

The iron age of man's unfolding reason gave birth to the worship of powerful and sagacious though cruel and jealous deities. Gods of armies and battles had their prototypes in powerful warriors upon earth who exacted from their devotees and subjects the craven worship of servile dread. The far-famed Zeus of the Greeks, Jupiter of the Romans, Wodin and Thor of the Saxons, were all divinities of this stamp and partook far more of the characteristics of the Egyptian Typhon and the Persian Ahri-man, than of the mild, pacific Osiris or the benevolent and merciful Ormuzd.

Deities are not imaginary beings, they are stern and sober realities, as much so as any of the forces of nature which they are often intended to portray.

Personal deities with all the weakness of humanity have frequently at the outset been distinguished men around whose memories have gathered networks of tradition which have gradually grown to assume proportions quite out of keeping with the original. The story of Romulus, the founder of Rome, familiar to every boy who has studied history, is a fair sample of the manner in which gods have been manufactured.

Romulus was a powerful man but not popular towards the end of his career. His was a strong but not a loving character, and therefore he inspired that awe which to many minds is inseparable from the thought of deity, but could not maintain his position as head of the nation because his power untempered with mercy had not won for him that reverence which is the only true safeguard of one in high and therefore dangerous position.

The Acts of the Apostles informs us that Paul and Barnabas had difficulty in preventing the inhabitants of a city where they preached from regarding them as incarnate deities and offering sacrifices to them.

Paul's character was just of that metal which arouses the enthusiastic admiration of some and the most violent detestation of others, as he was a great power wherever he went, but often strove to carry matters with too high a hand and depended too much upon his authority as an apostle. He was dogmatic and had an intense love of power; was capable of organizing churches very successfully and keeping up the interest his preaching had awakened; but though commanding his followers to prove all things and hold fast only unto that which was good, the test he applied, the rule by which he desired spirits or teachers to be judged was far too orthodox and rigidly theological and gave too little prominence to the works of the spirit by attaching far too high value to a mere doctrinal agreement with his own peculiar creedal conception of truth.

The hero of whom we have read in our lesson this morning was one whose claims to be a man of God rested solely upon living evidences of divine power; these evidences being of such a nature that they would convince any candid student of them that they were indeed evidences of divine presence and celestial influence.

Elijah was one of those rare men who are to be met with perhaps once in a generation; to say that his character was faultless would be absurd, to argue that all his actions were justifiable would be to claim for him an exemption from sin to which he laid no claim; in seasons of deep distress and difficulty he betrayed occasional infirmities, but take him all in all he was a very high type both of a prophet and a ruler.

Prophesying is a rare and glorious gift, a true prophet is an inventive genius in the moral world, a discoverer of great principles, an enunciator of startling and revolutionary truths; utterly unlike the priest he is neither a clerk

nor a bookworm ; he fears the power and courts the applause of none ; he commits himself to a difficult and often very dangerous task, for he is an iconoclast as well as a builder, he pulls down, he uproots, he calls upon the sacred flame to consume the stubble, he is an innovator and can never be made to cry peace where there is no peace. He destroys lethargy, arousing sleepers from their heavy slumbers often by a rude and startling cry. At his voice dry bones arise and cover themselves with flesh, his voice is as the shrill blast of a resurrection trumpet, calling nations and individuals to a judgment they had long forgotten. In recent years, Thomas Carlyle, the essayist of 1849, came wrapped in a prophet's mantle ; his cry was for justice, for sturdy righteousness, for uncompromising equity, and though sometimes severe, the grandeur of the man consisted in his determinate opposition to every form of craftiness and humbug. The priest has never been a prophet, his education biases him in a totally opposite direction, he has been too long drilled to think in a certain narrow groove, too long taught to bow to human authority, to consult records to find out what God said to the world when He communicated with it of yore, while the prophet listens to hear what God is saying while he is now speaking to his children.

The word "testament" is an unfortunate, and when applied to God's revelations a meaningless and misleading word. The Christian Testament contains the statement that the testament is of no value while the testator liveth, and we would ask our orthodox friends, when God died, and left a will bequeathing legacies to his creatures ? Of course men may compile testaments and leave bequests to those who come after them, but as the true God never leaves the earth without a witness of his presence and never ceases to be in active communication with His children, He has never withdrawn from the world and left a book or order behind him which must for all time serve to act as a remembrancer to humanity of the time

when nearer relations existed between heaven and earth than exist at present.

In "the sweet story of old," a sentimental Christian ballad very popular in Sunday Schools, the children endeavor to look back over a cloudy vista of nearly two thousand years to a time when God walked on earth and talked with men in human form as a man converseth with his friend, and sigh over their own lot as being far less happy than that of the Galilean children upon whose heads Jesus placed his hands. How little can the authors of such a song realize of the state of the world two thousand years ago, and how little can they perceive how unavailing are all outward conditions to beget holiness unless the springs of action in the human heart are so attuned as to place the spirit in communion with those universal agencies of divinity which in no period or country are afar off or inaccessible.

No matter how gross the darkness of the times, no matter how forlorn the prophet, the era of the brightest prophecy was often an age of intense and culpable moral darkness.

Prophecy may include prediction or the foretelling of future events, but exhortation to reform is always the burden of the prophet's cry, and works of charity are always performed by him who is worthy of the name of prophet.

Prediction is often only a careful and intelligent recognition of cause and effect, a nice balancing of probabilities; and even when absolutely the result of direct revelation from a higher realm of being is not for an instant to be regarded as the highest function of the prophet. We must never put mysteries and miracles on a par with moral forces which testify to their divinity by the power they exert in elevating morals, succoring the needy and vanquishing error; to fortell the future is not always the way to prepare persons to meet it. Astrology and fortune-telling may be genuine enough, and there is certainly such a thing as a science of astrology of which

some persons are masters; there is unquestionably such a gift as predictive clairvoyance, and when these means of gaining some idea of the future are judiciously made use of, no rational or even spiritual reason can be brought forward for their denunciation.

The predictions of Joseph and Daniel are brought forward in the Bible as singular proofs of their fellowship with the Most High, and yet the Bible abounds with anathemas hurled at the heads of those who practice witchcraft and sorcery. Even business clairvoyance is justified, for no slight is cast upon the prophet who told Samuel how he could recover his father's asses. The truly great man is sure to be something of a prophet in the predictive sense of the term as those who possess unusual knowledge of cause and effect are like dwellers high up upon the hills who have a far more extended horizon and wider view of the surrounding country on all sides than those who dwell in valleys or nearer the bases of the mountains.

Truly great men are moreover certain to accomplish many astounding feats which excite the wonder and often the adoration of a crowd; but where is the test of their real supremacy, wherein do we find the source and secret of their abiding reign? Surely nowhere if not in the superiority of their minds to the influence of adverse circumstances and the benignity with which they behave to all their fellow-beings.

The story of Elijah being fed by birds is a touching little narrative and loses nothing of its beauty when, instead of understanding the ravens to signify the feathered tribes of the air, they allude to the wandering Arabs who in common with almost all oriental peoples are intensely intuitive and given to hospitality wherever a stranger inspires their confidence in his integrity. The unwasting cruise of oil and barrel of meal convey to us many important and instructive lessons, as this story places directly in the foreground the unfailing reward of unselfish benevolence. The widow and her son were

taught to be generous, to exercise hospitality to a needy spiritual messenger, even though reduced to an extreme of poverty. Because they gave away some of their scanty store and served the stranger first, through thus extending succor to the needy, they were provided for through all the siege of famine which followed in the land. Literally this story may or may not be true, it may be regarded as a wonderful exhibition of magical power consecrated to uses of benevolence, or may be considered as altogether figurative. In either case the teaching is the same. We must give in order to receive. If we are always on the alert to see how we can be a blessing to others a way will be opened for us to receive benefits which can no more reach the selfish and the stingy than light shine in or air flow in when the lattice is closed and the door fastened.

Spiritual gifts, graces, powers are all around us, the air is full of ministering angels. Healing energies are bountifully circulating in every nook and cranny of the universe. We can open our souls toward these benign influences, and as light keeps pouring through an ever open window, so all that is needed to sustain us perpetually flows in upon us when our fervent desire is that it should flow through us for the benefit of others. True prayer is after all only sincere desire, it is an earnest effort of the soul, and is therefore utterly incompatible with idleness. Those who are too indifferent to work with all their might to accomplish a desired object will never pray with that fervor of the spirit which insures a favorable response.

You may all be mediumistic more or less, you may all be used to some extent by some invisible influence in the accomplishment of some work near to your hearts, but while passivity or a totally negative or neutral frame of mind may promote the development of simply automatic mediumship, the highest condition is that which is a compound of the medium and the adept.

There is far too much blind and thoughtless following of spirits. The cries of fraud, which are so constantly raised, and some of which are undoubtedly justified, could never be needed if those who are favorable to the idea of spirit communion would refuse to accept folly from spirits as strenuously as they refuse to accept it from men and women yet in the body. The strangest circumstance attending this pitiable infatuation is that no class of persons upon earth have ever more vigorously protested against the idea of all disembodied human spirits being in a condition to render their every statement trustworthy than the Spiritualists themselves.

From first to last the Spiritualists have raised their voice, and often to a shriek, in protest against the infallibility of spirit communications in the olden time; believing as they do that inspiration is no exclusively modern gift, that a revelation from the spirit world has been granted in some degree to all peoples and in all ages, maintaining that the Spiritualism of this age is a natural consequence of a natural law, immutably governing all intercourse between mundane and superterrestrial spheres; there can be no excuse for a blind unreasoning faith, a fanatical and bewildering superstition, which accredits spirits with prerogatives utterly foreign to those of embodied humanity.

Theosophists, so called, have frequently gone to an extreme in an opposite direction. They with their mysterious occult theories of elementaries, astral bodies, shells and so forth, have endeavored to cut the ground almost entirely from under the feet of the spiritualists who have naturally rebelled against the substitution for their philosophy of a system far less rational and consoling than their own.

Astral forms are so very frequently alluded to in theosophical treatises which are now being much read in this country and abroad that we wish to say a few words concerning these candidates for public recognition who are said to be at the bottom of almost all the error and

nonsense which palms itself off as a revelation from celestial regions.

The word "astral" is clearly derived from the Greek *astron* which signifies a star, and the astral spirits believed in by ancients were undoubtedly the inhabitants of the stars.

The ancient science of astrology, being founded upon the wisdom of the ancients, a distinguishing feature of which was a considerable knowledge of astronomy, dealt with the conditions and inhabitants of other worlds than the little planet Earth. While the illiterate masses believed only in the earth, regarding it as the only world in space, believing that sun, moon, and stars were all alike subservient to it and existed only as its satellites, having been created for the sole and express purpose of giving light to this small globe, the wise men of the East entertained such ideas with no more favor than do the brightest intellects of to-day.

There was nothing new in Kepler's or Herschel's theories; their novelty consisted only in their publicity at the time when ancient wisdom was given to the European continent.

To the unbeliever in spiritual manifestations as well as to the spiritualist there can be nothing unreasonable in the thought of other worlds being inhabited besides your own; it must appear the height of medieval ignorance and unreason to entertain the theory that this earth is the only world which supports conscious and intelligent individual beings, as there is nothing unique in the position of this planet among the heavenly spheres, it is only one of a family of worlds and occupies no place of marked supremacy in the system of which it forms a part; so that judging from astronomical observations and reasoning from analogy, we can only conclude that there is at least an immense probability of the ancient idea of astral spirits being a correct one, but the astral beings of many modern occultists are totally different creatures from the starry visitants whom the ancients declared

held communication with the wise men of the East. The modern *astral* is a repulsive, mischievous inferior being of whom humanity must needs beware, while the ancient *Astral* was a teacher from another planet, a spirit who travelled among the stars and had dwelt upon some one or more of them and therefore was a very instructive and entertaining individual to encounter.

Paracelsus, however, attributed to every human being an astral spirit or sidereal element in which the human spirit lives for a time after the death of the body. But this theory of Paracelsus and others was founded upon the idea that after man quitted his material body, he would inhabit an ethereal form in which he would be able to soar and travel among the stars: thus was the term *astral* applied to the spiritual body, whose limitations were far fewer than those of the fleshly frame. You all know that astral or starry influences have always been looked upon as mingled good and evil as this earth has not been universally considered by the wise as either superior or inferior to all other inhabited worlds. But all ancient theories aside, what more feasible explanation can be given of the influences which surround every human life on earth than that given by spiritualism, viz., that when the body dies the spirit either remains within the earth's atmosphere if the spirit's development be sordid or passes on to brighter and more ethereal states if the spirit is prepared for transition to fairer climes.

Now with the essential principles, the almost universal declarations of spiritualism, we have no dispute, and against these we offer no protest; we have no other theory to set up in their stead; all we demand of spiritualists is that they will act in accordance with their acknowledged convictions, that their faith shall be legitimately employed as a means of inducing reasonable conduct and that that *knowledge* of the spirit world which many claim to possess shall teach them to treat the spirits in the same manner in which if they are sensible they treat each other.

If spirits are perfectly natural, if they are only disrobed humanity, if the spirit begins in the life beyond the grave a career determined by the progress it has made while in the body, then "try the spirits" is a wise injunction that none should fail to heed and follow.

In this utilitarian and ultra-practical age, the fruits of a system which entitle it to be regarded as divine must be of a very practical and comprehensible nature. Though mysticism and subjective states of ecstasy have a charm for some, the majority of the citizens of the modern world want to handle and see the blessings which are to be conferred upon them by any system which claims a heavenly origin.

The building of massive temples, the expenditure of fortunes upon architectural prodigies is regarded by many as scarcely necessary in an age and country where church and temple building has in the estimation of many been carried already to an extravagant excess. Buildings may be employed and often are for very honorable and useful purposes and are centres of much laudable activity; but the building of a splendid structure is not the rearing of a spiritual temple. The Christian apostle knew what the temple of God truly is when he said, "Your bodies are the temples of the living God," and "the temple of God is holy which temple ye are." A temple may be a congregation, and a congregation calling itself a temple may occupy a building which derives its name from the associative appellation of the people for whose use it was built, but a spiritual temple is a concourse of spiritually minded people as a carnal temple might easily be formed of a company of worldly minded, sensual individuals.

We wish to utter no words in derogation of any legitimate undertaking of any body of people, but we should not be faithful to our light or true to our trust if we did not call away the attention of our hearers from external assumptions to practical and vital reformatory issues. It is recorded in the Talmud that once upon a time a very celebrated Rabbi was putting forward opinions in council

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which did not meet the approval of his brother savans; when they disagreed with him he declared that he could prove the truth of his position by working miracles and very wonderful things are said by tradition to have occurred in obedience to his command. But what was his chagrin when he found that the wise and illuminated Rabbis whom he thought he could instantly subdue by occasioning inexplicable phenomena coolly told him that granting the genuineness of all his magic, rivers might be turned out of their courses, trees might be rooted up by invisible agencies and planted elsewhere, lightning might be produced by occult agency which they could not explain, but nevertheless God had given them reason, and miracles must never be allowed to carry conviction in opposition to the testimony of the conscience and reason of man.

We do not deny that wonderful phenomena may prove the existence and operation of forces, yea, and of intelligent forces invisible to man. The bare fact of spirit interposition may be demonstrated by outward tests, and we will not say that the establishment of such a conclusion is not attended with beneficial results to all who have sufficient sober judgment to accord to miracles their true place in the economy of the universe.

Mr. Haweis, a very popular London clergyman, in a course of sermons entitled "The Key," has dealt very candidly with spiritualism, and says very truly that if it can be proved that spirits communicate at all, such knowledge is very important even leaving aside the question of the intellectual and moral calibre of the spirits. This sound reasoning from a clergyman is good evidence of the growing liberality which is now permeating all branches of the Christian church; but having granted the basic fact of spirit intercourse we must go on to deal with the subject matter of what is told us in our talks with spirits.

Nothing is more evident to any dispassionate reader of the Bible than that several thousands of years ago spirit-

ualism had assumed very similar proportions to those which it has reached to-day.

The state of society being widely different then from what it is now, prohibitory injunctions were deemed necessary to check the spread of a growing mischief, and therefore ecclesiastics have procured much of the thunder which they have used indiscriminately against all modern communion with the spirit world, from the Bible. But to apply to this age and the present state of society restrictions which in olden times were laid upon semi-barbaric people is to endeavor to confine the child who is old enough to be at school in the swaddling bands and cradle of infancy.

To-day investigation is the one thing needful, cool, calm, dispassionate research. The bulk of the people, who are receiving an education sufficient to fit them to use the ballot, people who are being called upon to go to the polls and vote for their governors, are surely enlightened enough to use their own faculties of observation and powers of reflection in connection with every event that challenges public attention.

Psychical research societies cannot do your work for you. It is not for any to set up a body of men in a new chair of authority and bow to their dictum as though they were the special oracles of heaven.

Scientists can be and often are just as tyrannical as priests and for this reason many materialists and agnostics are as bigoted and intolerant as the most arrogant and dogmatic churchmen.

In days of old when prophets had to show signs of their fitness to fill the prophetic office, works were demanded of them, the performance of which settled the question as to the source whence they derived their inspiration.

Elijah first multiplied oil and meal and kept alive a widow and her son in time of famine, and then when that son was apparently dead, restored him to his mother's arms in health and vigor.

Where are the signs of the exercise of true spiritual gifts to-day? It is easy enough to frame elaborate utterances, and lay claim to inspiration from the highest sources in the universe. Easy enough to say that Jesus controls a person's vocal organs or materializes in the presence of an audience in a modern temple, but even if this be the case, high-sounding verbiage and affecting spectacle can never convince the right-minded that his presence is of much value unless works are performed which leave the world better than it was before their performance.

We are not looking for the advent of a personal Messiah. We are not desirous of witnessing marvels and mysteries, but we are desirous of co-operating with any and every force which can stem the tide of vice, poverty, disease, and above all injustice, and inaugurate the golden age of peace, morality and equal rights and liberties.

A gentleman accosted us the other day with a very showy account of some marvels that had taken place in his own house and asked us our opinion of them. We declined to give any as we saw no sufficient reason for concluding they were worthy of credence; neither were we prepared to deny them. A day or two later another gentleman told us a very affecting story of the good he had experienced from sitting in spiritual circles.

A spirit came to him many times, purporting to be his mother; she addressed him with all the affecting tenderness which would characterize a devoted parent, yearning to bless a darling child.

At the time she first spoke with him, he was an inveterate drinker, a gambler, and unfaithful to his marriage vows. He relates that every time he frequented that circle room he found it growing harder and harder for him to persist in his evil courses, and at length entirely through the loving remonstrances of his spirit mother and the influence she brought to him, abandoned, one by one, all his evil courses, is now a temperance man,

a faithful husband, and one who shuns the gaming table as he would a scorpion.

He asked us what we thought of the likelihood of its being true that his mother really came to him? We answered without a moment's hesitation, we cannot and we dare not doubt; where the fruits of the spirit of truth are, there we know the spirit of truth has been.

Falsehoods and delusions do not produce such salutary results as these. Tricksters and personating spirits do not convert the sinner from the evil of his ways and restore tranquillity and joy to distracted homes. As surely as we should know that a human foot had passed along the aisle of this building, if we saw the unmistakable imprint of a person's foot upon the floor, so surely must we conclude that truth's messengers have been at work when we behold the results of the work of the spirit of truth in the lives which its advent has brightened.

Here is the living test of truth, not the claims but the fruits.

High-sounding titles, brilliant epithets and magnificent assumptions are often the veriest chaff, the husks which the wind of reason soon blows away, the stubble which the fire of spiritual perception effectually consumes. But when good is done, when the poor and the needy are supported, when diseases are cured and devils cast out, we may surely exclaim with unfaltering tongues, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is glorious in our eyes."

THE PROBLEM OF PRAYER.

HAVING been requested by a lady in our congregation, who has often in times past suggested to us fruitful topics of discourse, to devote the lecture hour this morning to a consideration of Prayer, we respond with great pleasure to a request which we know meets with an echo in the breasts of many present, who have not proffered it in words; and we will throw out the remark, to be taken up by all who will, that we invariably esteem it a favor when our friends favor us with their opinions as to what subjects may most profitably be discussed on this platform. Suggestions can be made to us either by letter or word of mouth; if any prefer, anonymously. Of course we do not pledge ourselves to take up every subject proposed, even should time permit of our doing so; but this we do promise, that no one's subject will be preferred before another's, — the nature of the subjects themselves being the only reason for some gaining precedence over others.

Having said this by way of explanation of the reason which has induced us to announce Prayer as our subject this morning, we will at once proceed candidly to express our own convictions on a question which has from time immemorial engrossed the deepest attention of the most learned, philosophic and speculative, as well as the humblest and most trusting minds. The Rev. Heber Newton has recently delivered a remarkable discourse in All Souls' Episcopal Church, on this great theme. From a report of this sermon in the New York dailies of the following morning, it is patent to all readers that the Episcopal Church in this country, as in England, holds a number of broad, liberal-minded men, whose field of work may lie in a certain section of the Christian Church to which they are bound by strong and enduring ties of

tradition and early association, while their teachings are so catholic in the true sense of the word, which is universal, that they are really natural religionists in all but their name. They do not divorce the Essential Life of the universe from the universe, but speak of the Infinite Spirit not only as of a loving parent, but also as of a great Indwelling as well as Over Soul.

There is really no reason whatever why religion and science should not shake hands, and acknowledge that there is no quarrel between them. Soon the confession must be made that, as sciences are many, so religion is itself a science, and the highest of all sciences. It is the science of right living, the science of man's moral and spiritual relations to the universe. Universal religion, or pure Theism, has nothing whatever to fear from the cold negations and ribald jests of materialism. The highest and most sacred affections of the human soul cannot be made fun of and ridiculed out of being. Facts will step in and enforce their right to live. Phenomena will occur, convincing the most obdurate sceptic that, even though nature be everything, nature holds infinitely more than she is supposed to contain by the scientific negativists of the present century.

We listen to so much negative teaching in many quarters to-day, that we sometimes wonder for a moment if everything is not a delusion, ourselves included. Some persons start the theory that there is no reliable history extant, no reliable biographies; in a word, nothing to which we can turn with any degree of confidence, in the hope that we may obtain some clear and trustworthy insight into the doings and sayings of people of past ages.

Among the men who negative history are some of the most learned, the most sincere, able and conscientious of modern scholars. They are guided to their conclusions, not by a spirit of carping criticism, but by an ardent longing for truth, a hatred of fraud and imposition, a

desire not to be imposed upon themselves, and a yet greater abhorrence of being the means of imposing upon others.

Are we losing anything really worth having as we turn our backs upon what was once regarded as infallible history and now appears little better than a mass of incongruous legend and tradition? Are we losing anything we cannot well afford to give up, and which we had not better have given up long ago? We think we may safely say that, as a race or a community, we are really gaining, for it has always been true that the records of inspiration were praised and valued the most when there was no open vision. When there was a living oracle at Shiloh, when the divine voice was heard speaking through the prophets and between the cherubim, whose wings veiled the mercy seat of the great temple at Jerusalem, the living voice took such powerful hold upon the people that parchment scrolls were not deified; but when in an age of materiality the avenues of direct spiritual communion were closed, when there were not any more prophets in Israel, the only resort was to the law and the testimony, — to what a poet has called, “records of a happier because a holier age.”

This is certainly an age of revelation, for revelation is discovery, and no recorded age of the world has witnessed greater discoveries than the present. It is just because the minds of the present day are so actively engaged in discovering new truth, that the testimony of others is fading into smaller proportions than it ever assumed before. One reaction always produces another; human progress seem to be accomplished only through an endless series of reactions; the golden mean, the happy medium, so often spoken of, is rarely attained. It seems well nigh impossible for most minds to steer clear of extremes, to nicely balance and carefully weigh merit, for either does the past loom up before us in such gigantic proportions that it screens the present from our view,

or the importance of the present is so exaggerated that we begin to speak slightly of the past; either do men's minds dwell so entirely upon things of the present that they are blind to the future, or they are so engaged in preparing for futurity that the present life dwindles, in their estimation, into utter insignificance.

The old orthodoxy, both of Jew and Gentile, which is now happily vanishing, always dealt with the idea of a God who once spoke to the human soul, and who will speak again. At Horeb and on Sinai he was supposed to have drawn especially near to man, and it was expected that he would in the future again draw near to earth in the person of a special messiah, who, as an anointed king and supreme head of the people, would, in a special manner, proclaim the presence of the Almighty.

Though such views as these are being daily modified among all intelligent people, it cannot be denied that they still influence, to a considerable degree, communities of decidedly pious and earnest people, who propagate them with evident sincerity, while multitudes connected with the Christian churches point to miracles as evidences of the truth of Christianity, declaring that some supernatural occurrences nearly two thousand years ago constitute the base of the entire fabric known as the Christian religion, and the second advent of Jesus of Nazareth, who is termed the Christ or Anointed One, is daily expected not only by the Irvingites and other sects of limited dimensions, but by all Christians who adhere strictly to the tenets of Catholic or Protestant Orthodoxy.

Now science steps in and denies miracle; it declares that there is a fixed and immutable law of nature with which God never interferes; it denies every premise of supernaturalism, discounts all miracles, and attributes every occurrence in the universe to some fixed, immutable law. Science is often avowedly agnostic in its attitude to all things spiritual; it knows nothing of a true

theosophy, a divine wisdom which is higher than all knowledge pertaining to the material world and limited to man's present sphere of being. But science is in no sense atheistic or materialistic; science is too wide a word, however, to be confined within the narrow boundaries which are usually assigned to it; it is, correctly speaking, a most comprehensive term, being simply the present participle of the Latin verb *scire* to know, anglicised from the Latin *sciens* into science; the word *sciens*, as you are doubtless all aware, means knowing; therefore the noun science is equivalent to knowledge. Speculation, conjecture, theory, hypothesis — these are not scientific; they may not be anti-scientific, but they are certainly unscientific in the sense that they are agnosticisms or confessions of doubt, ignorance and uncertainty.

Herbert Spencer is a scientific man; he is a specialist, however; his scientific abilities and conclusions are totally distinct from his agnostic asseverations; he declares, certainly, concerning many important points connected with sociology, for instance, that we can, and do definitely know something; his knowledge and his demonstrations are of priceless value to thousands of thinkers; but his bold assertion that God is unknowable, that spiritual facts, if there are any such, are profound and insoluble mysteries—these statements, though neither irreverent nor idiotic, are of no value to an affirmative philosophy; they add nothing to the sum of human information; they are at best but the honest lament of an aspiring mind that, when seeking for light on the great problems of eternity, finds only darkness; that, when listening for celestial voices, is met only by awful silences and bleak solitudes. No one can be more anxious for clear light on spiritual matters than a material scientist, who, having bent his whole energy to the task of interrogating nature and wresting from her her deepest secrets concerning her material side, finds her voiceless as the interrogator of nature in Mrs. Hemans' poem found the stars above and

the earth beneath, the rolling ocean and the mysterious winds, when questioned on the most interesting theme that can ever engage human attention, "Where has the spirit gone that I have known and loved on earth, but which has now vacated its material shrine and passed into a state of being beyond the reach of all my straining nerves and senses?" The answer of nature to her interrogatories is always a profound and unbroken silence when they ask of her material side a reply which, if it come at all, must come from the spiritual portion of the universe. Bishop Butler, in the last century, published a work which was for many years a standard treatise on theology—a collegiate text-book, a minister's *vade mecum* whenever the evidences of Christianity were called in question. Its title, "The analogy between the material and the spiritual universe," is doubtless familiar to many of you; perhaps some of you have read the book, which is well worthy of perusal. If you have, you cannot have failed to be impressed with the sound logical and deductive powers of the author; but Bishop Butler's writings, clear and valuable as they certainly are, do not altogether meet the requirements of this generation.

A liberal-minded clergyman of the Church of England said some years ago, and many others agreed with him, that Bishop Butler's book might now be put on the shelf. It is time we cease thinking of an analogy between the material and the spiritual worlds, for, said he, they are one. You have all heard enough about atonement; the word, correctly speaking, at-one-ment, means reconciliation simply; you have all heard of God being reconciled to God; you have heard liberalists affirm that man must be reconciled to himself, that an at-one-ment must be effected between the jarring and discordant elements of human nature until mind, body, soul and spirit all work together in sweetest concord and produce divinest harmony. We can readily settle in our own minds the ques-



tion of God's reconciliation to himself, for we must admit there is unity in the perfection of the divine attributes and operations ; we cannot tolerate the idea of a God at variance with himself. God, the eternal, is not a being in whom contending emotions can have play ; He cannot be influenced by changing feelings towards his creatures so that in one mood He is merciful, and in another, vengeful ; He cannot be moved out of his eternal track or turned aside from his eternal purpose by any wishes, words or deeds of ours ; and as a great portion of the old idea of the efficacy of prayer reposed upon the basis of imaginary changeableness in Deity, prayer, in its lower and more ignorant and superstitious forms, must of necessity be abandoned as fruitless now, and only remembered as the product of a less enlightened age.

Religious ideas and ceremonies grow up as naturally as do vegetables and animals. The carboniferous age produced types of vegetation which could not now exist on earth ; the gigantic animals, tall as the highest modern houses, when standing upright on their hind legs, which inhabited ancient forests, are now as the creations of a scarce remembered dream, and they could not now exist, yet they were necessary to pave the way for man, and for his sustenance. The law of the survival of the fittest, so manifest in nature, does not lead us to ignore the uses of forms not fitted, and therefore not destined, to survive ; they appeared and disappeared likewise in obedience to a law of necessity originating in divine wisdom and the eternal constitution of things ; and just as these denizens of the planet grew up and vanished only to prepare the way for the superior forms which should succeed them, so in the religious and moral world, so in the arenas of political and social conflict, ideas, practices, institutions, grow and fade in orderly succession, only to make at length room and conditions for the advent of a religion, a government and a social condition which

shall conform in all things to the deepest needs of human nature.

Our positions are always more affirmative than negative ; when we are destructive, we are only endeavoring to root up weeds or to burn stubble ; we never try to cut down venerable trees, until we perceive that they being dead are mere cumberers of the ground, occupying space which, if they were removed, could be devoted to more useful purposes than the preservation of barren wood. If ever we do strike our axe at their root, or seek to hew them down, it is because we see that they have passed the fruit-bearing stage, and no longer afford either the nourishment or shelter they afforded in the days of their youth and vigor. Many antiquated theories and institutions are practically lifeless now ; though once they were as trees full of sap, bearing luxuriant fruit and foliage, they can never live again, their likes can never be produced again, unless some wonderful experience in harmony with the theory of circular motion should bring about again conditions similiar to those which gave them birth ; but in the uprooting of these dead trees, our object will never be to work for demolition's sake, or to invite the world into a dreary wilderness where men will forever miss the grateful shade and welcome fruit those now dead trees afforded them of yore. Prayer is a tree under the shade of which millions of weary travellers have rested and found refreshment when hot, weary, and dusty on the pilgrim road of life ; prayer is a tree which has borne such copious and delicious fruit, sustaining many who without it would have utterly failed and fallen prostrate on the road of life, that any flippant or sneering remarks concerning its supposed ridiculousness always fill us with disgust at the heartlessness and folly of those who treat contemptuously one of the greatest sources of comfort ever available by weary and suffering humanity. Prayer has a history, it has credentials which none can pronounce worthless, and our duty as reformers and


liberal thinkers is to explain philosophically why prayer is efficacious, or else remain silent on the question. Prayers are of many kinds, and those who say work is prayer, prayer is effort, are quite correct.

It is indeed true that God helps those who help themselves; that there is a law of self-help in the universe; that when we attain to the stature of the perfect man, called by Paul "the fullness of Christ," we shall be self-made, self-educated, self-developed; that is, we shall, to use another New Testament phrase, have worked out our own salvation, not necessarily with fear and trembling, but at any rate by means of earnest work and long-continued effort.

Materialists only take into consideration the material side of the laws of nature; they acknowledge the immutability of law, but do not understand the origin and nature of law. Mind is the source of law. Will is the sustenance of law: the law of a country or state is Will in operation; in a despotism it is the will of one or a small minority opposed to that of a multitude; in a free republic or democracy, it is the will of a majority overruling that of a smaller number; in an absolutely perfected state of society it will be the united will of all, flowing harmoniously in a peaceful and undivided stream of upward tendency. Now, all the laws of nature are revelations to us of an infinite purpose that can never be turned aside from its regular course; no prayers or efforts of ours can possibly change the law which is beyond us all, and to which we must all submit; that law prevailed before man appeared on earth and will continue when all the human race shall have passed on to brighter spheres of being. We must all admit that there is a law, iron-like in its inflexibility, and yet that law, which seems to the stoic only a relentless force, propelling everything forward to some unknown and possibly frightful goal, cannot but reveal to the careful student that its motions are all guided by infinite intelligence; it geometrizes

with perfect accuracy ; it maps out the heavens in shining constellations with absolute precision ; it brings light out of darkness, gladness out of gloom, and good out of evil ; it cannot be changed, but it can be discovered, analyzed, understood, complied with ; and when we secure its co-operation, instead of fighting against it, we are in harmony with our environment, we go with the stream of tendency, instead of fighting against it ; the current is stronger than we, we cannot successfully battle with it, we cannot change its course, but we can so go along with it that we reach that condition of perfect oneness with the law that enabled Jesus to declare that he and his Father were one. The law to him was the matchless love and wisdom of the Eternal Parent ; the parent knows better than the child, the parent will not deviate from his course to please the child, not because of perverse obstinacy, not because of caprice, but solely on account of superior knowledge. The Eternal Parent frames the universe to meet the highest requirements of all the beings he has called into existence, and, being possessed of infinitely greater knowledge than his creatures, never answers the foolish and ignorant requests which they in their blindness proffer, vainly imagining that what they think best for themselves and others is really what is best for them.

We do not endeavor to impress upon our hearers the idea of an Almighty Sovereign, seated upon a throne of state in some inaccessible location in the universe beyond all human sympathy and emotion ; we rather picture the All-Good as the Eternal Life of the universe, which dwells within as well as acts upon every creature. Practically, you deal with God when you deal with your own highest nature ; that *atma* or seventh principle in man, which according to Asiatic Theosophy illuminates the mind and endows humanity with life immortal, is the very breath of God, the essence of divinity within us ; it is this divine life within ourselves that Jesus alludes to



when He speaks of the Father who dwells within him doing the works. To arrive at a perfect union with our highest nature, to harmonize the *anima bruta* with the *animi divina*, is to have attained to that supernal light of adepthood, that highest standard of spiritual unfoldment, that has caused the twice-born to accomplish spiritual wonders, and even command the elements by grappling with the underlying forces of the universe and that has led to the ever fostered belief among all peoples, that there is really such a thing as deific incarnations. To comprehend truly the nature of prayer, and the means by which it becomes effectual, we have only to study the laws of nature in their relation to material activity first, then raise our thoughts to a contemplation of these same laws as operative in the realm of mind, then go another step higher and endeavor to realize their working in the domain of spirit. Now it is a fixed conclusion in the realm of physics that certain causes produce certain effects; that if we can influence the cause, we influence the effect as a matter of necessity; we cannot possibly change the relation of cause and effect; certain results inevitably follow certain courses of action, but we are not in matters of agriculture, for instance, solely dependent upon influences over which we have no control. How do the farmer and the gardener work? they know well enough that grain and fruits and flowers must have light and air and moisture, they cannot grow without these essentials; but the cultivators of the earth assist nature, they do not trust entirely to her operations outside themselves, they co-operate with her, she works through them, and they accelerate results by compliance with her demands. You cannot say that, if it is so ordained, either by God or nature, that you shall be clothed, housed and fed, it is unnecessary for you to make any effort, for whatever is to be will be, and you cannot prevent it; you cannot sustain fatalism by declaring that seed-time and harvest, famine and plenty, are entirely beyond man's control,

and are regulated by forces in the hands of which man is a mere puppet. Every year proves more and more clearly that man is a medium for regulating nature, that what man does or leaves undone affects nature to a very considerable extent; nothing can alter the law, but the law is, that effort shall be rewarded, and that certain actions constitute causes which produce certain and inevitable effects. Now, just as nature does not usually throw the pearls which are in the ocean bed at your feet, but gives you to understand that you can have them if you dive deep into the ocean, and work for them; as the gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, gems, all the precious metals and beautiful and useful things lying in her bosom, are for you if you seek for them and work for them, but not otherwise; as you can, if you will, cut down the forest trees and build yourselves cabins; as you can if you will work hard enough, get marble and granite from the hills and build yourselves sumptuous palaces; as you can by industry till the ground, sow the seed, gather in the harvest, and then cook, and masticate the food your labor has produced, and thus be nourished by your own efforts; so the experiences of daily life all go to prove that man, though unable to change the law, is able to comply with it and so act that he can alter his relation to most things around him, though as yet he is largely at the mercy of a power, greater than himself, that supplies him with sunshine, air and rain without which all his efforts would be unavailing.

We may say that we *know*, we have not the slightest doubt about the matter, that every force of being is intelligent, conscious, possessed of volition, and that all these forces emanate from and are convertible into pure spirit; spirit itself is the primal fountain whence all forces spring; it is the one absolute existence, the self-existent being, which throws from within itself the material universe, and draws back into its bosom all that is objective to the senses of the body.

Mind must develop in man, intelligence must improve, the spirit must liberate itself from the thralldom of the senses, before genius, talent, or invention is possible. What control has the savage over nature: to what extent is the barbarian free? his strength of limb and power of muscle cannot avail; the largest and strongest bodies are not those which eventually survive and live to subdue the earth and carry all before them. The potentialities of existence are all in mind; the physical universe is a gigantic spirit-materialization, and that phase of spiritualistic phenomena now creating so much discussion is inviting you by a statement of its claims to study the true relations of the invisible to the visible, of mind to matter. We go far enough to say that we believe the time is coming when there will not only be a weather bureau for foretelling the weather, but a bureau for controlling it; rain is largely in the hands of man; the planting of trees and the establishment of electric wires will bring rain from the clouds, while the uprooting of trees will prevent an abundant rainfall. It is man's mind, his intellectual, his invisible part, that makes discoveries enabling him gradually to arrange the world to suit himself. The earth is given into the hands of the children of men, its population must remain mere creatures of circumstance until will-power and intelligence enable the human family to use what a celebrated novelist has called *vril* and which in its highest condition or last analysis is the absolute power of creative spirit. Now we have no reason to multiply words to make you understand the idea we wish to convey concerning the power of man over nature, the power of mind over matter; there is indeed an invisible and immutable law, but the law is that every door in the universe can be opened by you if you will only set to work to make or find a key that, when inserted in the lock, will cause the portals to swing open; the key is a mental one and it can only be

forged as the active spirit bends all its energies to the task.

Prayer has been truly defined by the poet Montgomery as the soul's sincere desire ; it is will-power, it is mental effort, it is spiritual fervor, it is the very opposite of idleness and harmonizes fully with the most advanced ideas entertainable concerning the need and the reward of effort. Many people complain that prayer exhausts them ; they are both physically and mentally weary after they have prayed earnestly ; they have literally wrestled with an unseen power like Jacob of old ; they have had dealings with unseen beings and have come off victorious ; so great has been their effort that they feel for the time being as though they must have expended a vast amount of their own individual power and by means of it answered their own prayers. We do not deny that people in great measure do answer their own petitions, but we do not stand alone in the universe ; the spiritual forces which surround us every moment are like the sunlight and the air ; prayer opens spiritual doors and windows, it pulls up blinds and ventilates the chambers of the mind ; it is an act of intelligent co-operation with existing agencies, standing ready to enter and work for us and with us if we will only summon them in. You know how instinctively people pray in times of danger and necessity, and you know how very frequently prayer has given courage to the fainting hope and the sinking spirit, and has brought relief to those whose maladies were beyond alleviation by any material remedy. Laugh at prayer if you will, attribute what you may be pleased to call its fancied success to imagination ; you have not yet told us what imagination and fancy are. If fancy or imagination can heal the sick, revive the despondent, cheer the lonely and do, in a word, what all the skill of learned doctors often fails entirely to accomplish, then as the human mind is capable of these emotions, fancy and imagination are factors in human life and a place must be assigned to them commen-

surate with the degree of use they are to the human family.

We hope we shall always be eclectic and liberal enough to value results more than theories, attainments more than modes of arriving at them, ends more than means. We trust we shall never become so carried away by the enchantment of a single system that we repudiate all others, at the same time we do announce ourselves out and out metaphysicians; we do not call our system Christian science, and we by no means endorse all the views of people who assume that title; they are too *exclusive* to satisfy our *inclusive* demands. Magnetism, electricity, light and color, magnetized paper, flannel, etc., etc., roots and herbs, even drugs and patent medicines, are all doing an amount of good; but at the core of all the systems ever in vogue, we discover a mental and spiritual principle, a something that begets faith, confidence, hope,—all those mental states so needful to recovery. Any means you may employ will be effectual or ineffectual in proportion as they raise your spirits and overcome an unhealthy condition of the mind. Any so-called remedy may be a remedy in your case.

The application of this conception to our subject is self-evident; the prayer of faith is the only prayer which is said to save the sick, because the prayer of faith, or at least the prayer of hope, which is a lesser degree of faith, is the only prayer that is really earnest, importunate, energetic, and therefore a means of setting in motion active and powerful spiritual agencies. Prayer is utter folly, even blasphemy, when it is a request that God will do your work for you instead of your doing it yourself. Prayer meetings have been so absurd, and have been the scenes of so much hypocrisy, that we do not wonder that the very name of them has brought prayer into disrepute in many quarters. It is no uncommon thing for a man to pray on a Sunday evening for honesty; he will stand up in the church and ask God to make him honest, and yet

he knows all the time that he has no intention of conducting his business during the ensuing week in any different way from that in which he has transacted it hitherto. He knows that the tricks of trade in which he indulges are thoroughly dishonest; he justifies them in a lame way by saying that he must cheat a little in order to get on in life and make provision for his family; well, if he feels all the time that cheating is a painful necessity, that his duty to his family demands it, that he must silence his troublesome conscience, let him never dare to pray for honesty unless he either comes to believe that honesty is the best policy, or, that policy aside, that he will follow conscience come what may, and look to heaven to sustain him in the path of integrity. It is the empty formalism that makes prayer the hollow mockery it often is; it is the asking with the lip for what the heart does not desire, that renders prayer blasphemous as well as ineffectual, and it was against that hypocritical sanctimony that Jesus so loudly protested when he uttered bitterest denunciations against those of the Pharisees who consumed the substance of orphans and widows and then for a pretense made long prayers in public that their victims might the more easily fall into their clutches. Many modern Christian religionists wax wroth and eloquent when dilating upon the enormity of the Pharisees of two thousand years ago, abandoned wretches, Christ-killers they call them, as though such enormities had never been practised since as were practised by a small minority of the Jewish community in Palestine in the days of Jesus, while all the time the vices they condemn in others and exaggerate if those others happen to be Jews or anything but nominal Christians, they practise whenever they hold prayer meetings and make "beautiful prayers" in public, to be seen of men and so disarm suspicion that the makers of such "beautiful prayers" are looked upon as saints in society, and can therefore engage in deceit with less likelihood of discovery than

if they claimed to be frail, ordinary people of the world only.

Public prayer has a value in bringing thought and desire to a focus, in suggesting to an assembly the particular necessities of which the mass of mankind stand in need ; everything is both suggestive and infectious in some degree and in some direction, and thus whenever we endeavor to lead the aspirations of an audience the utmost we aim at is the opening up, by suggestion and infection, of the spiritual side of the natures of at least some who are present, for we cannot fail to perceive that, though spiritually as well as physically, blessings lie all around us, though the ground is covered with heavenly manna, we must pick it up. Prayer for the sick is at the present time so wonderfully efficacious in many parts of England and America, as well as on the continent of Europe, that to deny its efficacy would not only be to deny an overwhelming amount of testimony from the most competent persons, but to deny also an array of facts which have come under our own immediate notice and which we can refer to no other cause than to answered prayer.

We know as well as any one that many people make out that answers to prayers are evidences that their own particular theories of religion are the true ones ; but the nature of the cures themselves and the results obtained equally, by persons of widely different theories, go to prove that Dogma has no part in determining the efficacy of prayer. The Roman Catholic at Lourdes believes the Virgin Mary works the cures ; the Evangelical Christians in England attribute everything immediately to Jesus ; the Theosophists claim the power of will ; the Christian Scientists, the power of mind. Now, as the same results are performed by these four classes of persons, and by many others also, each party holding views distinct from all the others and each claiming the effects produced as evidences of the superiority of their own

peculiar system and doctrines to all others, one can see how utterly futile it is to ascribe universal powers and purely natural results due to compliance with some great spiritual law to any particular church or kind of theology. Prayer is an effort of the spirit: the spirit works and gets paid for it, just as the mind and hands work and reap a reward. The student burns the midnight oil, applies himself diligently to his books, while his classmates are frittering away their time in dissipation or profitless amusement, and the gates of learning open to him, while they remain closed to his idle and dissolute companions; so with the spirit's energies; heaven opens to those who knock upon its door, the petitioners receive, the seekers find, the workers win.

A materialistic friend said to us one day when we advised him to pray for his daughter's recovery, that he should not think of wasting time and breath in any such absurd and and useless task, and wondered that any person of intelligence could recommend so ridiculous a recipe; "the laws of nature," he said, "allowed of no interference, and to ask any power that we called God to work a miracle was ridiculous." We said to him, "You often speak of logic and of reason; you claim to be both a rationalist and a logician yourself; now if you are consistent, you have surely done nothing to promote your daughter's recovery if, as you say, any interference with the ordinary course of events on the part of any power beyond ourselves would be a miracle, and miracles are impossible; then the gist of your conclusion must be this: whatever is to be, must be and will be, and we can do nothing to alter it." He replied by saying that it was his duty to use all possible means for his child's recovery, and that if he had not sent for a nurse and doctor and done all he could to raise her up, if she died and he felt that he had neglected something which might have prolonged her life, he should never forgive himself. His kind, fatherly heart had so far broken away from his cold

cast-iron theories of the inexorability of nature's laws. Now we said to him, "all we mean by prayer is the setting in motion of a force that is as much in harmony with nature's law as any means which you employ; prayer procures an invisible nurse, doctor and medicine. Its power is real, substantial; it is the most real thing of all to heal or destroy. The emotions of the mind so work upon the body, that the body's condition can be entirely changed when the mental currents are altered. This truth, susceptible of scientific demonstration and constantly being proved, leads us only to the acknowledgment of invisible as well as visible agencies which accomplish suffering or work relief."

Prayer for the conversion or salvation of others is a branch of the subject which we must not entirely overlook, while prayer for the departed is also an interesting and very pathetic question. You know our views on missions well enough to know that we are thoroughly unorthodox on that score, and never tolerate the thought that the eternal destiny of human souls depends upon the success of missionary societies; every spirit must be its own savior; the savior is the soul within, which, however, can be called out when a sufficient appeal is made to it. All that prayers for others can do, either on earth or in spirit life, is to arouse the dormant spirit to work out its own salvation. Example, influence, precept, desire, moral suasion, are all influences we exert upon one another constantly, and just as we call into active exercise either one or another set of emotions and faculties in those with whom we come in contact, so when we pray for others and our prayers are answered, we have been the means of stirring up within those for whom we pray, a divine element which is their own, and which when in exercise lifts them to a higher life. No spirit can escape the consequences of sin; all punishments are remedial, reformatory, purgative; there is indeed a comfortable doctrine of fire and brimstone for those who need purifi-

cation after death, for sulphur, fire and brimstone in material life are most effectual purifiers, and have been chosen as symbols not hard to understand when used as correspondences to means of purification in the spirit world. If any of you need a spiritual cleansing, you cannot escape the necessary scouring-out of your moral nature either on earth or beyond the grave ; no one can save you vicariously ; no other's prayers can avail to save you from the consequences of already committed evil, but through earnest prayer, through pure desire for your welfare, beloved friends and faithful angels may so work upon the divine within you, that through their influence you may forsake evil and aspire and at length attain to a higher and nobler life. Pray without ceasing, never let your good desires falter, or your earnest longings for another's good relax ; pray in confidence the prayer of faith, and through your instrumentality healing, health, righteousness and every blessing will fall in refreshing showers upon all the ground across which your spirits move. "God helps those who help themselves ;" honest toil is always rewarded.

The Practicability of The Ideal.

It will probably be universally admitted on all hands, and that without question, that the present age is emphatically and before everything else, what is commonly styled a *practical* age; an age of business, an age of commerce. Such an age certainly has its advantages as it develops talent, affords scope for genius, levels barriers between long antagonistic nations, brings the populations of widely sundered districts into close companionship with each other; perfects mechanical inventions and invites reform in every direction where the results of the reform can be made to subserve material uses; but such an age as the present is unfortunately an avaricious, money-grubbing, mammon-worshipping age; the golden calf is enthroned on high, a vacillating Aaron is preferred to a strictly conscientious Moses.

Where once the Eternal spoke to man in a burning bush and commanded a whole-souled moralist to declare righteousness to the people, insisting upon total abstinence from every species of idolatry, there, as soon as his back was turned and he had retired into privacy to commune with the living God, the people urged his brother to make them a golden divinity which should supersede the Great Unseen in their devotions. The story is one of deep and thrilling interest and is peculiarly appropriate to the present day; though relating to events that occurred thousands of years ago, it is just as full of instruction for us and just as graphically illustrates the actual condition of life, in all the great modern centres of commercial industry, as though it were an allegory of passing events fresh from the pen of some vividly inspired writer now on earth and completely familiar with the present social, political, and industrial crises.

The reader of the story may be somewhat inclined to blame Moses for remaining so long upon the mountain and leaving the people without a leader or with only that poor substitute for one that Aaron proved to be. Moses was a prophet and Aaron was a priest. Under the rule of prophecy, peoples grow strong, brave, free, independent; under the dominion of a priesthood they always demoralize. A prophet carries with him and in him a moral law, which overawes even the most trifling and gets itself obeyed by the force of its superior authority, while priests, who as a class desire opulence and fame, are far more readily inveigled by hope of gain into becoming the dupes, instead of the uplifters, of a sensual and idolatrous community.

When any nation can wail forth the saddening plaint, "we have no more any prophet among us," the doom of that nation is certain as to-morrow's sunrise, unless a prophet arise among them and, by sheer force of spiritual fervor and power, lift them even in spite of themselves out of the pit of degradation into which they have fallen. We are no prophets of evil, we are, as you well know, no pessimists, looking with eyes dulled with despair upon the fair face of nature and mourning that everything is as bad as it can well be; going from bad to worse, in fact, till evil will at length abolish good. We are, on the contrary, firm believers in the truthfulness of the bright, healthy sentiment of the joyful hymn we sang this morning, which declares, "It only needs a goodly heart to know that all is love;" but then, though it only needs a goodly heart to know that all is love, without the goodly heart we cannot feel it. We can look at the universe with no eyes but our own. We can only experience hope, joy, love, peace and every other delightful blessing as these virtues are shed abroad in our hearts and become the governing principles of our lives; and while all things do work together for good to those who love good, those who love evil of necessity find that all things work together for evil to them; not indeed instantly, not always

so far as appearances go in this life at all, but assuredly the stream of tendency, whichever way it flow, must inevitably bear on the nation or individual toward that only destination in the direction of which that particular stream is flowing. We are no believers in total depravity, of everlasting condemnation for any spirit, no matter how deeply dyed in iniquity or steeped in selfishness; but without admitting into our theology Calvin's place of eternal torment for the reprobate, or Dante's unending and unimproving Inferno, or Swedenborg's hells, in which certain spirits are likely to remain for eternity, confirmed in evil and taking no delight in good, from a temporal point of view there is certainly such a thing as a nation, as well as an individual, getting into such a plight that, so far as calculable results are concerned, that nation or that individual is hopelessly, irretrievably lost; having spurned the last opportunity for reclamation, judgment has ensued and the result is, nothing can avert the impending doom.

We know, for the pages of history are full of it, that countless tribes and nations have so gone under the flood of ruin that they brought upon themselves, that, figuratively speaking, the Messiah has been rejected, the Christ crucified, all over the world. First one nation and then another has spurned its spiritual messengers; condemned the innocent and patted the guilty on the back; till not only the solitary instance of a desolated Palestine, but the multiple instances of desolated countries all over the earth, which meet the eye of the traveler at every turn, prove that ambition overreaching itself works the downfall of the ambitious, and that those who are themselves desirous of being greater than their neighbors in the end become the least of all.

The present controversy waging in the Boston pulpit and press, concerning the rejection of Jesus by the Israelites, only needs broadening and elucidating on general principles to be made the basis of a thorough and searching analysis of the reasons why nations rise and

fall and why afflictions befall men any way. Hitherto all such discussions have for the most part led to the putting forth of such exceedingly pronounced views on opposite sides of theological arguments, that little practical good has resulted from them to the community engaged in them; but we trust and believe that the time has now come, when people of differing schools of thought will come much nearer together than ever before, and forgetting the immediate issues at stake in their controversies, be prepared to consider on general grounds that which Christian ministers, as a rule, have made offensively personal or racial when the Jews have been brought into court.

Now it is sheer absurdity for any minister or anybody else to single out the Jewish people as objects of God's particular displeasure; to accuse them of crucifying Jesus and therefore reaping the awful consequences of exile and oppression which they have endured for many centuries, when history just as clearly proves that other nations have as effectually gone under as the Jewish; nay, far more effectually, for many and many a powerful nation of antiquity, when it lost its territory, died out entirely and has been lost to posterity, so that even its name and place of abode are not mentioned in all recorded history; while in the case of the Israelites, the proverbial nine-lived cat is an easily destroyed animal when its tenacity of life is contrasted with the ability of the Jewish people to survive the most cruel and barbaric tortures ever inflicted upon any nation.

In the name of common humanity, denounce unsparingly and utterly the mendacious charges which Christians have brought against Jews in order to build themselves up on Israel's downfall; at the same time we do not ask you to foolishly extenuate every action of the Jewish people and refuse to take warning from their rejection of that only Messiah which ever has come, will come, or can come, even the light of a higher life, the vision of a more excellent than a self-seeking way,

which when followed leads to life eternal, but when rejected causes the spirit to descend into the darkest shades of Pluton, to be there tormented by the dog Cerberus, an impersonation in canine form of that very besetting sin of avarice, had it not been for which, according to all ancient story, Lucifer would never have fallen from heaven and rebel angels would have been unknown.

Tantalus up to his neck in water, yet consumed with thirst, is an eloquent symbol of those who seek wealth for its own sake on earth, and then, either in age or decrepitude in this world or on awaking in another, find themselves up to the very throat in the things which they desired above all else, yet all the while most miserable because these sordid unrealities for which they bartered all that was finest and loveliest in life can ever taunt but never satisfy the cravings of immortal mind. The infernal practice of to-day, that of amassing wealth, of accumulating material treasure no matter how, is one that demands a rebuke from all quarters at once; to administer that rebuke is the province of the representatives of every branch of industry, and learning; and we care not from what point of view the matter may be regarded, superior culture, more common sense, a nicer balancing of comparative values, and, above all, moral growth, will be the only triumphant forces in the deadly battle which must soon be waged between personal ambition and the welfare of the race. It is the cry on every hand that wealth must be secured in order to ensure happiness, and happiness is without doubt the natural and legitimate desire of all. To be happy is to fulfill the end of being, but pure and permanent happiness is only obtainable in a way that involves self-sacrifice, so long as self is uppermost and the love of one's neighbor is but slightly developed.

Swedenborg states the whole truth about celestial life in his dissertation upon love. He divides love into three separate kinds of love: the love of God, the love of neighbor, and the love of self. These three loves are

alike good, but to produce harmony in any life they must be rightfully subordinated; the two former must rule and subdue the latter, for when the latter subdues either of the former, man, having inverted good, becomes a fiend when he might be an angel. Now if happiness is so desirable and good a thing, as it is universally admitted to be, it becomes a primary question in ethics, how can we best secure it, what methods will avail most in the search for it? Happiness is surely not a momentary tremor of joy, not the ecstatic delirium of an instant, which, like the fever-dream of an inebriate who has momentarily drowned his senses and with them his sorrows in a wave of alcohol, lasts but for a moment, as a brilliant flash of lightning may illumine a summer midnight when the thick oppressive atmosphere hides moon and stars only to make the awful darkness which follows it appear more frightful than before. Happiness is a calm, bright, tranquil light which shines perpetually, but whose light is capable of such intensification that in it there is always room for hope and expectation. Hope may be lost in love, but only in the sense that love is greater than hope and therefore can contain it; even in a love as perfect as can be conveyed there may be yet unsounded depths which will reveal their glorious wealth of gems hidden within those famous mines as the ages roll away. There is no determined extent of happiness, the seeming determinate is always an indeterminate; there is forever a something that doth not yet appear that will appear some day, and when that for which our eyes of spirit are now looking out shall have been realized, the soul can still look forward, and gazing into a prospective abyss of eternity, can still exclaim, "It doth not *yet* appear what we *shall* be."

A mere feverish ambition for material grandeur, when contrasted with such anticipations and delights as these, is but sheer idiocy. No one is blinder to his own welfare than he who denies to himself the blessedness of conferring happiness; this brings with it the deepest, serenest

and most abiding bliss of all. Those who live for self only are what Jude calls, "clouds without rain." They have only a semblance of having, they contain nothing, they are mere inflated balloons ready to burst at any moment, but when they break the world is none the better for their having been. They have given it nothing and so at last they have found out they have got nothing from it; the clouds rain down their waters on the earth and sea and then from both these elements they draw up moisture to enrich themselves, but this they again shower down upon the earth; if they get nothing, they have nothing to give, but if they give nothing, they have nothing to receive. It is true everywhere that unto those who have shall more be given, and from those who have not, shall be taken all that they appear to have.

If ever a character was ideal, if ever Quixotism came to a head, if ever idealism and transcendentalism manifested themselves to the fullest possible extent on earth, the embodiment of all these things was met with in Jesus of Nazareth. He was according to the evangelists the very sum and substance of idealism. He lived in a hard, crude, realistic age. He was surrounded by people, whose very circumstances tended to foster a natural love of money and of pomp. He was born at a time when Messianic expectations all centered in a warlike hero and continued to increase in this direction, so that he was rejected, and BarKockba, a military Messiah who appeared about one hundred and thirty years later, accepted, and yet except where the narrative gets mixed with the sayings and doings of this later warrior, the evangelists declare Jesus to have been a man who had the audacity to stand up and tell the whole world, the Jewish nation included, that all the prophecies had been misread by the doctors of the Sanhedrim and that when Messiah came no carnal weapons would be employed to recover Judea from Rome, but a spiritual kingdom would be set up which would rule the world by love and not by fear.

Jesus may have quoted from Hillel and from all parts of the Talmud, he may have drunk from oriental fountains and interpreted afresh the Hermetic philosophy of Egypt, the Vedantic philosophy of Hindostan, the golden rule of Araby and the profound truths embodied in Zoroastrian inculcations; but no matter where he quoted from or whom he followed who had visited the earth before him, he set his face like a flint against the prevailing materialism of his age; he denounced mercenariness unsparingly, and according to Luke not only blessed the meek and lowly in spirit, but the poor in this world's goods. He went to the Essenian extreme of blessing poverty for its own sake and thereby ran counter not indeed to the universal experiences of mankind, but only to every rule which governs the transactions of worldly business. Gospel teachings, when intelligently interpreted, are simply wise estimates of comparative values. They show the deepest and clearest insight into the relative worth of various commodities under discussion.

Jesus does not say the raiment and the meat are of no value at all; but only declares them to be of less value than some other things. "Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment," cannot by any fair-minded person be interpreted to teach that food and clothing are valueless, but they are of less value than life and the body.

No one would dispute you if you should say the human head is more valuable than hair or hats and bonnets which cover it, the toes and fingers are of more value than the nails which grow upon them to protect them. Food and raiment are subsidiary to life and the body, and are only of account in so far as they minister to the body.

Now the crazy search for wealth which animates so many business men and women to-day perverts life into a long agony, makes the earth a purgatory, almost a hell, and wastes life and the body in the accumulation of goods that cannot possibly afford the slightest satisfac-

tion to any one except while in a physical condition to enjoy them. Luxurious living is often purchased at the cost of every power and sense that can make luxury enjoyable. People rise early and retire late that they may have money enough some day to set a better table than all their neighbors ; in nine cases out of ten, all the best years of their lives are spent in a wild, insane race after the money that will enable them to gratify a sordid and vulgar ambition, and with what result? even when they are successful in reaching the goal of their financial expectations, their health is ruined, they are victims of chronic indigestion or dyspepsia, and all the delicacies of their tables nauseate them while their physicians condemn them to a diet which could easily be obtained with what a day laborer can afford out of his scanty earnings. Is not the life more than meat, would it not have been wiser to have gone slower, to have taken matters more easily all along and never to have come into that most pitiable state where the money to buy delicacies only comes when the stomach refuses to digest them? And how is it with fine array? The jewels, silks, and satins rare often come only when the body has grown so languid that there is no enjoyment in disporting them and they have often to be laid aside for the slippers and dressing-gown of the sick chamber. The body has been sacrificed for wearing apparel and then it refuses to wear the finery for which it has been destroyed. But, we shall hear in reply to this, are you not forgetting that though many a parent has broken his health in the race for wealth, he has been working for his children rather than for himself and these children come into the possession of their parents' hoarded treasures in their earliest youth, and this treasure exempts them from the necessity of working for their living at all? Poor creatures; we are sorry enough for them when this is the cry. Who are these sons and daughters of millionaires that occupy such enviable positions that they need do nothing for a living? They are for the most part a foolish and contemptible

set of slaves, dupes, dudes, and dandies ; they strut upon the stage of life like peacocks, but contribute nothing but vice and insanity to the society in which they move. When they have brains and are determined to do something, they usually become monopolists of the worst kind. These are not the boys and girls that as a rule make great and glorious men and women ; no Grant, no Garfield, no Whittington ever came from such a crowd of unfortunates. The men who have to carve their own road to fame become great, not those who are carried from their childhood upon the shoulders of others.

Let a boy or girl feel that he or she has no need to work for a living ; bring children up to be fine ladies and gentlemen, looking upon honest labor as degrading, and if they turn out worthy of anything it will be almost a miracle. Of course, there are cases where those who are born wealthy do squeeze through the needle's eye into the spiritual Jerusalem, but they go in as unladen camels, they have given up their wealth to society, not by a single stroke of their pen, signing it away to some convent, monastery or order, but so employing it as only stewards of it, that they feel they are working with borrowed capital and are responsible for the use they make of all entrusted to their charge.

If you are, any of you, born to the purple, we do not advise you to literally sell all that you have and give to the poor so as to secure heavenly treasure ; you could do that, and by so doing only escape from responsibility and increase pauperism by helping the poor to live a life of mendicancy, which above all things else needs to be overcome. To give money away for no equivalent, except to the aged, the sick and the sadly overworked, is folly and mistaken kindness ; but to lay out wealth in such a manner as to bring labor to the laborers, and payment for honest work, and in that way to destroy the anomalies of useless clothing locked up in warehouses while there are millions of bare figures starving in the winter for lack of raiment ; food going bad, while mil-

lions famish; houses empty, while whole families are huddled in cellars, is in the only true sense to give to the poor; give them work, then pay them for it.

Socialism raises the war cry against monopoly and all injustice, and suggests that government control of all necessities is the remedy for existing evils. Many socialists undervalue moral suasion altogether, and thereby make a fatal mistake in not seeing that something must first dispose the mind of a nation to equity, before equity can be established by law. People in a free republic, such as this, where it is the boast of all that democracy, not aristocracy, prevails, will not and cannot be made to bring good laws into existence and rigidly enforce them until they are sufficiently developed to desire them and to insist upon carrying them into execution.

Prohibitionists talk of stopping the liquor traffic by prohibitory legislation, but how will you get prohibitory enactments? only by the voice of the people demanding them. There must be a majority on the side of a movement or it cannot become a law. Agitation on Temperance, Woman's Suffrage, or any other reform, is useful as it awakens the moral sense of a community and creates a desire for good laws; not only for their passage, but for their enforcement also. As the old teacher said, we must "keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." If one is stabbed through the heart, death instantly ensues, as the heart is the vital central organ in the body, so the moral sense is the vital centre in man's intellectual and spiritual economy; whatever affects that, changes his whole course of action. Love is stronger than all else; men will endure for affection what they will endure for no other cause and under no other pressure. Even animals are amenable to love more than to every other emotion, so that not cruelty but kindness tames the savage monster of the forest, charms the serpent and gives the magician power to toy unharmed with the most venomous creatures upon earth. Too much stress can never be laid upon the need of

working upon the highest sensibilities of human nature ; we must ever aim to touch what lies beyond selfishness, and when we seek it with all our might, we shall surely find divinity in all.

The great truth which is being brought to light with peculiar clearness by the metaphysical healers of to-day is one that demands most serious and sober consideration at the hands of every parent, teacher and reformer. Though some mental healers calling themselves Christian Scientists occupy a rather exclusive position in the religious world, and awaken the hostility of many and call forth the honest criticism of all, there is that in their creed or declaration of principles which is founded on so stable a rock of permanent reality that nothing can ever dislodge it from its abiding resting place. The truth to which we refer is this, that everything is essentially good ; that Deity is all in all ; that sin and disease are only appearances in a realm of shadows, while health and virtue are eternal conditions of infinite spirit. Theodore Parker owed much of his success as a preacher and adviser of youth to his firm conviction that nothing but truth and goodness could effectually content mankind. Emerson saw the same great truth, and even went so far as to ignore the rite of baptism because in his eyes the child brought to the font was purer than the officiating minister. Plato saw this when in his dialogues he makes Socrates point all his pupils to the perennial fount of latent knowledge within each human breast. Buddha acknowledged this when he told all who would obtain Nirvana that by abstracting the mind from all externals they might find profound peace and highest wisdom in the deepest breathing of their own inmost souls. Jesus knew this when, knowing what was in man, he refused not to consort with publicans and sinners. Peter knew of this inner goodness of human nature when he told his readers of Christ going and preaching to the spirits who had been two thousand years in prison. Milton knew of this when he enjoyed his Paradise Regained far more

than his *Paradise Lost*, and thought it the finer piece of work. In a word, all teachers who have been truly great have felt that human nature was not rotten, but on the contrary perfectly sound at the core, and that the thing to do is to try and reach the core; to try and bring to the surface the living waters which lie deep down in the hidden recesses of man's moral being. Some wells are very deep, some mines require an immensity of working before they yield anything, and the workmen may often get discouraged as they put down their shafts deeper and deeper still into the earth and yet find nothing; but there is something there, and, if not in time, assuredly in eternity, the divine life within will manifest itself and more than amply repay all who have struggled to reach it for all their toil.

It is a great fact in human experience that people as a rule get out of life, and out of others, just what they call out. Go through the world doubting everybody, and you will find yourself doubted at every step; despise others, and you will be despised yourself; hate others, and you will be hated; love others, and you will be loved. Have you not often felt an indescribable feeling of repulsion and distrust creeping over you in the presence of some one about whom you know nothing and whom you have accidentally met for the first time; have you never been into somebody's house or somebody's room when there was no one at home, and felt a feeling of repugnance stealing over you, and knew not what caused it? The site of the house may have been most eligible, the room luxuriously furnished and fitted up with an eye to the finest artistic effect, and yet gloom, despondency, passion or some other angry or morose feeling awoke in your breast, and you were most uncomfortable and ill at ease without knowing why? The reverse is equally true. You have gone elsewhere, and though there have been no very charming externals, something sweet, soothing and invigorating has come over you and you have known instantly that you were in

a happy home, and in a room occupied by a person of refinement and nobility of character. It has always been admitted that a person's home bespeaks his character. No one denies that dress, tone of voice and manner, are indicators of character, but there is a something far deeper than anything the outward eye can see, or ear discover; there is a subtle persuasive magnetism, or rather psychical influence that goes with people that appeals irresistibly to its own affinities in the nature of all that it approaches. To utilize this subtle finer force, to come into rapport with the better features of human nature by appealing to what is loveliest in human character, is to set for yourself a high ideal and try to live up to it in such a manner as to lift others to that high level also. A teacher not only needs a high ideal for himself and scholars, he needs an unwavering conviction that no matter how idle or even vicious his pupils may be, that they are endowed with every conceivable virtue in their inmost constitution; let the children or young people feel that naughtiness is really expected of them, that they have a reputation as black sheep and that they are really not expected to be white ones, and they will very soon confirm their teacher's expectations concerning them.

We know that facts relating to past experiences may be brought up easily enough and presented in a formidable array as arguments against even the possibility of viewing all things through rose-colored glasses. If experience compels us to be pessimists, how can we be optimists? Those who have had sad and long-continued experiences with human heartlessness and obduracy may plaintively inquire, "Can we shut our eyes to facts and persuade ourselves that evil does not exist, because we imitate the silly ostrich and hide our heads lest we should see our pursuers?" Are not the theories of modern metaphysicians quite impracticable? Is it not an absurdity to attempt to deny the existence of moral and physical disease when the ravages occasioned by num-

berless disorders both of mind and body are self-evident to all but the wilfully blind? Does not the moral microscope show up plague spots in character as effectually as it reveals the choleraic microbes which physicians declare they have seen traveling from place to place and infecting the bodies of human beings?

These and many similar questions are easy to ask, and to many questioners they appear to be unanswerable objections to the optimistic theory, but they are after all little better than sophistries, and require to be met, not in a spirit of arrogant denial, but by cogent reasoning on the superior power contained in the opposites of all these evils. Now we will admit, at all events, for argument's sake, that all evils and diseases ever supposed to exist, exist in reality; we will go far enough to admit, if you so desire, that there is a great arch-fiend attended by millions of imps going about perpetually seeking whom they can devour; we will admit the existence of countless hosts of excarnated fiends, and allow that obsession or demoniacal possession in its most exaggerated form is a thing of constant occurrence; we will grant all the premises of those who postulate the theory of infection on the ground that disease and sin are positive realities, and can be and are communicated in the very air, from mind to mind and body to body, but admitting all this does not shake our previous convictions by the weight of a feather. If sin and disease are strong men holding their castles in unquestioning security, they can only hold them so long as a stronger man does not put in an appearance; but if the stronger storm the citadel, then the strong must own themselves defeated.

The theory of magnetic healing as well as of mind cure, and indeed equally with it though on a somewhat different plane, admits and enforces the idea of the contagion of health, and that without necessarily denying the contagion of disease. There cannot be two absolutes or two almighties; either health is more powerful than disease, truth than error, righteousness than sin, or

the reverse. There must be either a Supreme Good or a Supreme Evil, and as none but devil worshipers can logically admit the latter, Supreme Goodness must be, in the thought of all, the only eternal and absolute reality in the universe. The question of the day is not as some people think, God or no God ; it is God or Devil ; one or the other there must be ; which is there, or which is the Supreme Power. Science sides with God against the Devil, and no science does this more unfalteringly than the modern science of evolution. The doctrine of evolution is death to the devil ; it throws all the reins of government straight into the hands of God ; it is, when logically interpreted, a material view of absolutely pure Theism, and in our estimation the very science which by taking hold of the scientific intellects of the present century will dethrone the devil and enthrone Deity in the temples of learning the world over. Matthew Arnold's stream of tendency ever making for righteousness, Herbert Spencer's eternal energy, may not convey to most minds the idea of a personal God, but they do carry the thought of an infinite goodness at the core of the universe to the minds of all who undertake to define by way of limitation a power infinitely superior to ourselves in all respects ; but we can feel secure in the embrace of even an eternal energy which is wise and good enough to work in a stream of tendency that inevitably makes for righteousness. To admit as much as that, though far less than most Theists would have us admit, is nevertheless to admit enough to establish upon a rock of eternal and invincible strength our beautiful philosophy of goodness supreme in the universe.

Now to return for a moment to the teacher and his class ; he has some very hard, obstinate cases to deal with ; he is baffled at every turn in his efforts to turn the current of his pupils' thoughts into rightful channels ; he is met at every turn by obstacles which appear insuperable. How is he to meet and vanquish them ; how is he to awaken a divine nature in the hearts of some who

have hitherto given no evidence of possessing much else than a diabolical nature? He must satisfy his reason, before he meets his class, that every one of the young scapegraces he has to deal with contains deep down in his nature an element of pure divinity, and that he must develop his own divinity so that his class can be infected by what he calls into action, this latent goodness which inheres in every one of its members. Some, of course, will be harder to reach than others; some will respond quickly, and others will be like stones which only very long-continued dripping wears away; but just as sure, nay far more sure, than that smallpox, fever or cholera is contagious, must be your faith that virtue is contagious. We need a system of teaching to become universally prevalent, based upon a supreme belief in the innate goodness of human nature; this turns old theology upside down, it utterly abolishes the hideous delusion of total depravity, which, far from being a doctrine repugnant to the carnal mind, is the most consolatory and encouraging of all conceivable doctrines to those who are not only carnal now but wish for a good excuse for remaining so. It is not humility but love of sin that encourages low views of human nature, that makes the words, "poor sinful worm," and like expressions, sound like music to the ear, for the inference is obvious that if we all are such poor, contemptible wretches, bred and born in iniquity, conceived in sin, in total antagonism to all virtue from the moment we drew our first breath, it would be unreasonable, preposterous, to expect us to be anything else than monsters of vice until miraculously regenerated by the all-powerful suasion of the Holy Ghost; but if on the contrary the Holy Spirit of God is born in us, if it is the fundamental principle of our being, our very essential life, the essence of our existence, we need not wait for miraculously changed hearts, for old ones to be taken out and new ones put in, before we can love and practise virtue, but from our tenderest years we need only strive to hear and lovingly obey the prompt-

ings of our good angel to be able to run with zeal the race that is set before us. We must indeed watch and pray, for temptations crowd thickly around us and flesh is weak and prone to seduce the spirit ; but when we can realize fully that we have always at command an infinitely stronger power than that of evil, we shall never succumb to evil ; never lose courage, never fear lest it finally gain the victory over us. It may be quite impossible to convince a patient that he has no disease, still it may be quite possible to convince him that his disease can be cured, driven out by means of a force stronger than the disease. The animal magnetist says he has a power in his body exuding through his pores that is so forcible in its action and endowed with such healthful potency that it can expel disease and introduce into the system out of which disease has been turned a powerful vitality sufficient to repair waste and rebuild all decaying tissues. The mental healer says there is a power of mind sufficiently strong to change the currents of your thought, so that your thought will in future be constructive and build up a healthy frame, while it has hitherto been of the destructive order, and has therefore weakened, ruined the body. The spirit medium says, "I have a band of guides around me who can put to flight all the dark spirits who obsess you," and there is no reason whatever why such statements may not be credited and faith induced in the patient, which is indeed saving faith, which is naught else than implicit confidence in and complete co-operation with an infinite and eternal reservoir of health and virtue, unfailing, unconquerable, all-conquering.

Longfellow, in his "Excelsior," has truly pictured the success of an aspiring soul, a success related to eternity and that no earthly defeat could possibly shake ; if it were not for the last stanza in his poem he would have preached pessimism ; omit that last stanza, and the teaching of the poem is immoral and despairing ; but with the final stanza in its place, the poem is one of the most

superb pieces of actualized idealism ever presented to the world. The boy did succeed, though he lost his earthly body in the effort; he was a shining, preaching star in the life beyond; he was a voice from the sky bidding the world come higher; he spoke in no faltering tone, but with clear ringing accents from beyond the tomb; he was satisfied even though he had failed utterly, and he beckoned and called others to hold firm in their hands, "The banner with the strange device, 'Excelsior,'" even though in always clutching it they might lose everything which moth and rust can corrupt and which thieves can break through and steal. Longfellow can never be forgotten, because he touched the deepest and truest springs of human nature and fathomed the abysses of immortal being, so as to inspire every reader who can drink of his spirit to press boldly on in spite of every obstacle to reach a goal of felicity hereafter where the results of all patient, toiling, human endeavor will be the means of affording the happy spirit the exquisite unselfish joy of rising higher while drawing others onward.

Some persons object to the works of Ouida, the greatest novelist of the day in her line, because she shows up human nature as it is now, at its best and at its worst. The only flaw we can detect in her writings is that she does not seem to grasp the compensation in the future for those noble characters she depicts, with sufficient firmness; she leaves immortality an open question, she leaves the goodness of the Eternal among the probabilities; there is no evidence in her works that she is certain that though all earthly rewards may come too late, eternal results are ever sure. Infuse into her writings a little more confidence in God, a little more positive statement like that which constitutes Longfellow's *Excelsior* one of his great masterpieces, and the English novelist who resides in Florence, Italy, would be without exception one of the most powerful moral teachers of her time. A high ideal must not only be presented, its practicability must be demonstrated. Nature is a great economist;

the law of utility does work everywhere in all things; results do follow in every instance though we cannot always see them and they are not always immediate. No teaching is adequate that while presenting lofty idealism does not also show that a high ideal is not a mere phantom or will-o'-the-wisp which lures its victims to the tombs and there leaves them, but is in every case a steady heaven-born light which beckons the traveler nowhere but through the pearly gates into the golden streets of the celestial city whence those who enter shall go out nevermore. "It is all imagination, this idealism; these Quixotic theories, what do they all amount to? they do not bring us food, fire, and raiment," say the blind utilitarians who make no provision for wants beyond the body. Our answer is, imagination is not a farce, it is a reality. A thing imagined is a something imaged on the brain and heart of man, it is a reflection from some superior state of being. Everything must exist in spirit before it can take form in matter. Spirit is substance, and matter merely shadow; material shadows are produced by spiritual substances that cast them, *just as* a man, a tree, a dog, a house, and so forth, will each cast shadows, and each its own shadow; the shadow of a man being totally distinct from that of the tree against which he leans, so every material thing is in its condition an evidence of a certain state of mind that has been at work to cause it. The realm of idea, the subjective sphere of thought, is the place in which all inventions originate. An architect had planned a bridge between New York and Brooklyn years before the suspension bridge spanned the dividing river; it was all perfect in his thought, and so he could give the plans fully sketched out to the city authorities; and, when they were accepted, men set to work and translated a reality out of mind into matter, they succeeded in materializing an idea.

People ask if we believe that everything was created out of nothing? We answer, "No, indeed," but we

maintain all was previously involved in mind and was afterwards evolved in matter. Don Quixote, the favorite hero of Cervantes, the great Spanish poet, was not an impractical man; he was only too advanced for the days in which he lived, he was a seer and a prophet. Jules Verne has approved himself to the French Academy, members of which honorable body entertain the hope that the time will come when his extraordinary romances will but record actual occurrences. Are not all inventors romancers, visionaries, dreamers; do they not see with an inner eye what will one day become objective to the senses? What could be more incredible, on the day when it was first proposed, than an Atlantic cable; what miracle of old times seemed to prove more conclusively the need of divine or satanic agency to accomplish it than the idea of laying a cable three thousand miles in length beneath the deep Atlantic waters? It has been done; the messages go from Europe to America and back again in an hour or two. Not to deny the miraculous, and yet to attribute it to natural instead of supernatural agency, is the great idea of the most advanced of modern thinkers. This world is not alone in space, it is in constant, subtle communion with myriads of other worlds; across the bars of ether which divide the planets the one from the other, thoughts pass with the rapidity of lightning. Ideas that seize the genius in his moments of inspiration are breathed into his mind by unseen spirits, often wafted to him by the denizens of other planets which have reached a state of growth to which this world will yet attain, though it has not yet attained to it. The idealist looks within and listens for the silent voices which take no outward form of speech, and these reveal to him the models after which he patterns in his resolve to bring into outward existence something which heretofore has had no outward shape on this earth.

Cultivate the ideal, look high, study the best and finest models, and never be discouraged because it may take centuries of growth to unfold the ideal oak from the

ideal acorn. An idealist may be a worker anywhere at any trade ; no work is itself degrading, and no sphere of action so limited that the true worker cannot utilize it as the scene of his reformatory endeavors. The stage may be made a most effective pulpit ; the concert, even the ball-room, may be turned to good account by those who would idealize amusements and reach the morals of the community through popular modes of recreation. A sensible person never loses sight of the fact that the ideal is the only thing really worth striving for. All material uses are but means to loftier ends, to higher spiritual results. Amusements need not be abandoned, and places of amusement need not be denounced ; but they need elevating, the moral tone of recreation needs to be improved ; and when people seek for distraction from the wear and tear of business life, let them go to the theatre, the concert or the dance with the rational intent of satisfying some legitimate need of their nature, which, when supplied, will help them to do the business of life more perfectly.

As means to an end, pictures, statuary and song are as necessary as they are natural ; and, inasmuch as society is not equally organized and wealth so impartially distributed that all can provide themselves with works of art and virtue, let those who have an abundance of this world's store learn to enjoy the good gifts fortune showers upon them by doubling and quadrupling the enjoyment they can get out of their possessions by taking a delight in the pleasure these objects confer upon the thousands whom they invite to gaze upon them.

Life will be self-denial no more when all desires are pure and unselfish, when self is eliminated from the thoughts of all and each takes pleasure in another's pure enjoyment. Then the gratification, not the suppression, of impulse will evoke the highest good, and then humanity's ideal will be attained and God's kingdom will have come.

ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS.

THE first and second days of November have for many centuries been held sacred to contemplation of the virtues of those who have been called saints, and to the condition in the unseen world of those who have passed from earthly life unfitted to enter immediately upon a life of perfect happiness, and who therefore require further discipline than their earthly life afforded to fit them for the regions of the blest.

At the time of the Protestant Reformation, now between three and four hundred years ago, the doctrine of purgatory was swept entirely from the creed of all who protested against the Church of Rome.

The articles of the Church of England distinctly declare that the Romish doctrine of purgatory is repugnant to the word of God, by which is meant the Bible; and the Lutheran and Calvinistic churches of Germany and Switzerland entertain a similar opinion.

As festivals come round year by year, kept by millions of devout souls, who place implicit reliance on the teachings of the churches, and by millions of others, thoughtlessly and for form's sake, because it is a custom to observe them, we often think it well to inquire into their origin and history, and make an endeavor to find out what they were originally intended to signify.

We need not observe unless we choose; but whether we notice them or not, it may do us all good, and can do us no possible harm, to find, to try and find out, what it is that captivates the human mind and heart in ceremonials, fasts and festivals, the very nature of which compels us to admit that they were first instituted to call attention to subjects of vital interest and of the deepest importance to all men everywhere.

A saint, as you are doubtless all quite well aware, simply means a holy person; the word "saint" is merely the French adjective for holy. *Saint Trinité* means holy Trinity. Saint is therefore not a narrow or exclusive appellation by any means; it is one of the broadest words in the French and English languages; it means set apart as well as holy, and is employed as a means of characterizing the work of life of any one, or the qualities and uses of anything devoted to holy purposes.

On certain days of the year festivals are held in honor of certain individuals; they are or are at least supposed to be anniversaries; and the object of keeping an anniversary seems to be to keep fresh before the minds of rising generations the heroic deeds and noble self-sacrifice of those who have paved the way for those who can now walk along the road of reformatory effort, without being exposed to the perils and dangers which clustered so thickly around the feet of those brave warriors of old who went to heaven, many of them, in the literally fiery chariots of persecution and flame, devised for them by those blind as well as cruel persecutors, who vainly thought to stamp out ideas, inventions, and indeed all that was noble in humanity, by throwing the bodies of the world's greatest benefactors and enlighteners to the devouring flames.

But not one persecuted and martyred saint has failed to obtain that better resurrection to which all saints look forward, in more senses than one; for not only have their happy spirits long since joined the great family of beatified immortals in brighter worlds than this; but in the heart of the world which they loved, but which reviled, persecuted, crucified or stoned them, their names are held in honor, the praises of their deeds are sung, and they exert a posthumous influence over the hearts and minds of multitudes impossible to overestimate and incalculably greater than the widest influence ever exerted by any while in the mortal frame.

Even the Positivists, who deny individual immortality,

celebrate the days when great men and women passed from the mortal to the immortal state; the followers of Auguste Comte recognize in the humanity they worship all that have ever aided the progress of the race in any salutary direction; and should it be true, as Comtists affirm, that all that really lives of the departed is their memory, example and influence, surely not one has lived in vain, even though he live no more forever, if he has but contributed by one feather's weight to the real greatness and nobility of human existence.

But happily we may accept all the Positivist's healthful affirmations without allowing our minds to be distressed with the gloomy negations which so forcibly offset the brilliance of an otherwise radiant picture; but in giving up all despairing doubts and fears on the question of the possibility of there being no individual immortality for any spirit, we must not paint the future in such glowing tints, using no discretion in our pencilings, that any may carry away the idea that the condition of all spirits is the same beyond the grave, and that death, the great equalizer of all material forms, the great overthrower of all man-made distinctions, affords all an equal entrance into bliss on the other side of the mystic Jordan.

The reformers of the sixteenth century did the best work they could with the crude materials at their disposal; it was their peculiar mission to overturn the tables of the money changers who had usurped the very temples of religion and were trading upon the hopes, fears, and tenderest emotions of the human heart that they might extort wealth from the frightened crowds who would deed away all their property gladly to the church to save themselves and oftener those they loved from that fearful temporal hell into which the priests declared all who were not saints had gone, and out of which the prayers of the faithful, and more than all besides, the sacrifice of the mass, could deliver them.

Prayers and masses were expensive luxuries; they had to be bought and paid for; ecclesiastical revenues

would have been in many cases very small, had it not been for this fruitful source of income, and this being the case, and many churchmen living very luxuriously and getting themselves frequently involved in matters of civil strife, making it highly important to them to curry favor with monarchs if they would retain their influence, the sale of indulgences applicable to souls in purgatory became such a fearful scandal, such a fruitful source of shameless imposition, practised upon the affectionate, the credulous, and the poor, that the denunciations of Luthur, hurled against the Vatican, were none too strong at the time when they were uttered.

But it is not in a time of violent controversy, in the heat of a pitched battle between abuse and reform, that those calm, cool, many-sided views of questions can be taken that must be taken eventually, if we are to truly eliminate the chaff from the wheat; and while consuming the former, preserve and cherish the latter.

Purgatory to-day is being viewed in an entirely new light; new at least to the thinkers of this age, though we have no doubt but that originally, purgatory was universally believed in and far better understood than now or till quite recently, and that it was originally the only hell which found place in theology.

It is not our purpose this morning to trace the history of belief in purgatory; but only to try and assist you to realize the actual condition of the spirit after it has left the human frame as clearly as we can interpret and express it.

In the first place, in order to comprehend life beyond the grave, with any degree of clearness, we must disabuse our minds completely of the popular fallacy that the life of the spirit when out of the body is a life totally distinct and altogether disconnected from the life lived in the material body.

Life is one long unbroken chain of being, a chain of many links, of causes and effects of inevitable sequences, each added link being the only link that could possibly join on to the link which is behind it.

If we can alter effects, we can only do so by changing causes. If the causes are beyond our control, the effects are likewise ; but if it be true that man is not a creature of circumstances altogether, if he possesses a power within himself to modulate his career, then every separate act, thought and word is a cause as well as an effect ; the voluntary cause of some effect yet to be revealed.

A saint or holy person in our estimation is merely one who is loyal to the best he knows, who follows his uttermost convictions of right and duty ; who is not a self-pleaser, nor an egotist, nor a mammon worshiper, nor a mere economist or utilitarian in a worldly sense ; but one who throws his whole energy into his life work, whatever it may be, seeing in it, and in himself as the doer of it, an instrument for the blessing and raising of humanity.

He loves mankind, he seeks the good of all, his love flows out beyond all narrow limits of party, race or clan ; he lives and works for others not for self, and cares for self only as he sees in himself a means of accomplishing good to others. Such a person is not given to cant, is never self-righteous or censorious, never assumes an "I am holier than thou" attitude, never poses in the role of martyr, never seeks for fame or worldly applause or recognition of any kind ; he can suffer acutely, he can enjoy intensely, but his sufferings are not occasioned by personal defeat or loss, neither do his joys spring from the gratification of any personal ambition ; he suffers when a righteous movement is retarded because he knows that others are injured when such is the case ; he is rejoiced when his efforts to bless are crowned with success because he feels that those efforts cannot succeed without bringing in their train the welfare of some at least of those whom he desires to benefit.

It is everywhere admitted by all classes of thinkers worthy of notice that unselfish effort for the good of others constitutes true nobility ; that the highest type of mankind is ever that which puts a cause first, and the individual last ; and no matter whether Catholic or Protestant,

Jew or Gentile, Materialist or Spiritualist, all noble people must admire one who sinks self in a life-work for humanity. Such are the saints of all the ages, such the heroes nations delight to honor. To these are dedicated the costliest temples, the most gorgeous shrines. Over the remains of these stand the most magnificent memorials; and if at any time some have been honored with a nation's homage who did not deserve it, the worship and affection of the people have in reality gone out to the ideal, not to the actual personage.

Were we to investigate closely the lives of many who have been canonized as saints, we should be disgusted at the life-models from which the painters and sculptors of the church have worked; but when crowds have bent before their images and kissed their relics, they have not believed in any evil stories concerning them.

The people have had before them ideals of purity and wisdom which exist in reality only among the angel hosts who have been purified from every stain of earthliness, hereafter if not here, and when the supplications of a multitude have gone up asking the aid and intercession of the great and good, an answering influence has come, not from the poor wretches in spiritual darkness who have been falsely endowed with every virtue, but from those whose spiritual conditions accord in reality to the suppliant's ideal.

This thought is simply an amplification of several we threw out in our discourse on Prayer last Sunday morning, and it is one upon which we cannot dwell too often, as without its light the aspirations of nine-tenths of humanity appear so utterly futile and so pathetically false.

When Theodore Parker was travelling in Italy, his mind was greatly exercised over the condition of the docile, trusting worshippers who thronged the churches and presented costly offerings at the shrines of patron saints. He with his usual breadth and catholicity read between the lines. The material error faded from before his spiritual vision, and he concluded that God, who reads

the heart, cares very little about names and titles and very much about sincerity of aim and purity of motive. The poor peasant woman who counts her beads and asks the blessed Mary to keep her child out of purgatory is not unrewarded; even though the Madonna be a myth or the mother of Jesus of Nazareth hear not her prayer, some ray of divine help from the Eternal Motherhood of Deity, communicated through some loving spirit who has known the beatings of a tender mother heart, responds to the cry of that illiterate and humble though perhaps mistaken woman, and she is answered from that sphere of spirit which she addresses with her soul even though her lips may frame words of superstition born of the supposition that the realities of the unseen realm are widely different from what they are.

We wish, however, on this occasion not to enlarge further upon the efficacy of prayer and the laws whereby it is rendered efficacious, but to answer if possible a difficulty which has occasioned much uneasiness to many loving hearts, whenever the truth of spirit communion has been broached to them.

"Saints in light" and "saints at rest" on the lips of many people are synonymous, as multitudes have been educated in their youthful days to take an altogether unnatural view of spirit life, to divorce the spirit world completely from the material, to imagine that everything beyond the grave is totally distinct from everything on this side of it, while their ideas of rest are associated entirely with idleness, or something very closely resembling it; to all such the thought that their spirit friends are ever around them, watching over them and guiding them out of danger into safety, sympathizing with their griefs, knowing their sorrows, and helping them to be brave under them, smoothing obstacles out of their way as far as possible, accompanying them even into haunts of wickedness, if they visit such scenes, destroys entirely their old and carefully cherished theory that all their friends who are not lost forever, and happily there are many who believe

none are lost forever, are in a state of being where they are enjoying a perfect immunity from all tribulation and care, and that this blessed condition will continue theirs to all eternity,—there is certainly a poetical and peaceful side to such a picture which renders it very winsome to toilworn, weary humanity; but it is based upon an altogether false estimation of spirit life: it reposes upon a basis of fiction and disordered imagination, as it presumes that the mere fact of dying will so utterly change every condition of the spirit that its memory, affection, and all that goes to make up the essential individuality of a man or woman, will fade out and leave the once possessor of these powers in a lower condition of unfoldment, even though a happier and more peaceful one, than when he buffeted with the stormy billows of earthly anxiety and care, and grew spiritually by helping others out of darkness and prison into light and liberty.

There is, however, an inner sense in which such a doctrine is true with reference to the more advanced of those who still have loved ones remaining upon earth; for those who have really passed on to the higher spheres have such a clear perception of the uses of suffering, they know from personal experience what benefits it can confer, that instead of bemoaning the sad fate of their friends on earth who are experiencing similar temptations and tribulations to those they have undergone, and which have yielded, in their case, the peaceable fruits of righteousness, they realize so fully what is meant by “a light affliction which is for a moment working an exceeding and abundant weight of glory,” that instead of simply commiserating those who are in sorrow now, they buoy up the fainting spirits of their suffering friends by instilling in their minds such a confident assurance of final victory, that those who would otherwise be crushed beneath the weight of their heavy burdens are braced up by a fortitude which, though often those on earth know it not, is produced within them through the blessed agency of those angelic helpers, who never desert their charges even in the most painful hours of their seemingly most lonely affliction.

Unfolded spirits who tenderly sympathize with their beloved on earth, who aid and soothe the tempted and the weary, are full of hope and glad assurance for the future. They know what is in store for those over whom they bend. A wise sympathizer is never a lachrymose complainer. When people are ill, they are better without mistaken sympathy, that does more harm than good; for, though generally tender-hearted and sincere, it is invariably far more depressing than uplifting.

The sick in mind and body need strengthening and encouraging; they need sympathy it is true, but the only sympathy that is possessed of solid curative properties is a hope-inspiring sympathy, which is just as far from the cold comfort administered by stoics as it is from the unwise commiseration of those who "weep with those who weep," without leading the mourners to a point where they can rejoice.

The sympathy of Jesus with Martha and Mary of Bethany was genuine and divine; their brother Lazarus had been taken from them, and Jesus could not restrain his tears when he saw how bitterly grieved those tender, loving sisters were; he cannot and does not attempt to offer a cold, stoical substitute for help; he does not say, "Well, your brother is dead, everybody must die sooner or later; it is the common lot of all to lose their friends by death, and you cannot hope to be any exception to that universal rule; you will soon learn to live without your brother, you will become reconciled to his absence. I do not pretend to know whether he is living still, or will rise again or not; these things are insoluble mysteries, we cannot fathom them." Such language too often falls from the lips of those whose agnosticism, which they misname progressive thought, leads them to doubt immortality, and causes them to have no word of true comfort to speak to mourners.

Jesus said, without the slightest hesitancy in his tone, "Your brother shall rise again." He knew a resurrection followed the death of the body; he knew the spirit was

alive and that the sisters would meet their brother again. He did not tell them, as the callous would, that they were weak and foolish women, and that their grief was a something to be ashamed of. No, He wept with them; he acknowledged the reality of their sorrow, but at the same time turned their thoughts into such a channel that they saw beyond death to the resurrection.

It may be that the legend refers literally to a revival of one who was apparently dead and beyond the reach of all aid, other than that which a wonderfully gifted spiritual healer could apply, as in oriental countries interment follows so quickly upon death that many have been buried in trances and been raised to life again by a power called magical; but even should we accept to the full the literal side of the story, and believe that a man was really dead and buried and then raised to life again, we have not touched even the fringe of the garment of the great spiritual truth embodied in the narrative.

A physical resurrection would be followed by another physical demise; there would be no permanent results following from a miracle which summoned a spirit back to re-inhabit a mortal frame; but if the resurrection, so far as the sisters were concerned, was a spiritual fact, and referred to the opening of their spiritual eyes to discern the risen spirit, then they experienced the new birth, — the opening up of the spiritual nature, which is necessary to the perception of spiritual truth, to the gaining of an insight into the kingdom of Heaven, which is a state more than a place, and can only be arrived at by the opening up of the spiritual interiors of humanity.

The New Birth, so constantly insisted upon by Christian ministers as necessary to salvation, has been so perverted from its original meaning, so divorced from the old esoteric sense in which it has always been understood by Mystics and Kabalists, that the third chapter of the fourth Gospel, which opens with that beautiful narrative of the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, has been made the basis of an unnatural and most repul-

sive system of theology; one section of which teaches baptismal regeneration in a literal sense, the other, the miraculous change of heart which evangelical preachers and revivalists never tire of insisting upon.

To be born again is to become a saint or holy person indeed; but the twice-born sons of God, so celebrated for their spiritual powers in all mystic lore, are not those upon whose brows the sign of the cross has been traced and who have been sprinkled with consecrated water; neither are they those who have yielded so completely to extraneous pressure that their old hearts have been removed and new ones substituted; they are not children of the devil transformed into children of God, but they are children of God who were always such but who were not always conscious of their divine relationship.

A physical analogy may perhaps make clearer what we wish to convey. It is now everywhere admitted by astronomers that the sun is older than the earth; that, instead of being created on the fourth day to give light to the earth, it must have existed long before the earth was evolved from primal chaos.

Though the sun is the parent and the earth the child, and though the parent must exist before the child, yet the earth must have been for ages in existence before the sun, which was always shining, pierced the dark environment of the crude and partially developed earth.

Three mighty periods, each constituting a vast æon, must have passed away before the sun could shine upon the earth and the earth could look up smilingly into the face of its parent, acknowledging its wealth of radiance. The sun had found out the earth, yea, it had given it birth long before the child could recognize its parent. So it has been with every human being in relation to its Eternal Parent: God finds out man when man does not find out God.

This truth in the light of the spiritual universe solves every riddle and explains every difficulty connected with the superintending providence of Deity, and the constant

watchfulness of angels, even when the purblind eyes of mortal mind can distinguish no rift in the clouds and no beacon pointing to a haven of refuge in the realms of immortality.

"They rest from their labors and their works do follow them," is a text often quoted on the occasion of the interment of a good man's bones. To a certain section of orientals, rest has certainly meant cessation of all activity, absolute quietness prolonged eternally; but there can be no rational interpretation of rest affording any positive enjoyment unless it be translated to mean a conscious and active restfulness, a mind exempt from care, a spirit no longer affected with anxiety as to the issues of life, a body perfectly healthy and ministering to the mind without let or hindrance, a conscience void of offence, congenial occupation marred by no uncertainty as to its utility. All these states and conditions of being are necessary to a thorough appreciation and fulness of rest. Stagnation is death; inertia is destruction; it can only breed *ennui* and discontent; idleness cloyes upon the spirit, paralyzes every nerve, weakens every energy, and is suicidal in its effects upon character. The saints in heaven surely cannot be beings who are merely vegetating, who are living the life of an oyster or an anemone. When one of the most famous princes of Europe built for himself a splendid palace removed from the strife of cities, he chose for it the appropriate name of "*Sans Souci*," without care. That is a title which can truly be applied to those many mansions in the Father's house whither a great teacher of old said he was going to prepare places for those who followed in the track of his sacred footsteps. The life of Jesus, highly colored though it may be by the writers' pens, idealistic though it is at every turn, is a most healthful and inspiring life to read about, because it does not lead any one to imagine that the figurative crown can ever be worn unless the figurative cross is first borne, even to the summit of a Calvary whereon the flesh must be crucified and then rise to newness of life as completely the servant of the spirit.

· In these days, when so much agitation is in order concerning the historic Christ and the literal value of the Bible, it would be well for all who are truly interested in spiritual things to turn their attention to that important inner meaning in all scriptures which confronts the mystic at every turn ; a literal death and a literal rising again is not the matter of supreme importance it appears to many to be ; documents, whose authenticity no reasonable mind can doubt, proving the actual occurrence of alleged miracles, will not remove the veil of infidelity from the heart of the multitude to-day, but a recognition of those interior truths which are not dry matters of history over which schoolmen perpetually wrangle, but which are living principles of daily life and action. These can alone save the world from the perdition of sensualism and redeem the nations from the slavery entailed by a worship of the god of gold. Every nation which has ever undertaken to build itself up on another's ruin has miserably fallen ; its ashes and ruins remain to this day, standing memorials of the utter futility of mammon worship ; and the history of nations is only on a larger scale the history of individual men and women. To overcome selfishness in every form, to outgrow every vestige of clannishness, to forget all lower patriotism in the cosmopolitanism of those who can say "the universe is our country," to work for mankind and not for one solitary human unit, is to be on the only road which leads at length to the fair plains of Zion, to what Bunyan in his allegory portrayed as the Celestial City beyond the mountains which skirted the land of Beulah.

We, as a society, have been very recently called upon to look in the dead faces of many who were wont to mingle with us in their outer forms, Sunday after Sunday, in this pleasant hall. Some who have gone away were very old in their fleshly forms ; they had outlived the psalmist's limit of human life and were verging toward the fourscore years which are attained by comparatively few. When we look upon the aged countenance of a peaceful

veteran who has lived out his full term of days, we all say his death was only natural, and, if a mystery at all, it was only an instance of that great universal mystery of death which must always appear somewhat mysterious to all who are on the earthly side of it. But mothers and fathers have been called away also; some of these in the midst of their days, in the very prime of life, and over their transition a cloud of wonder always hangs. "Why were they taken away?" is the question which trembles on every lip. We can only answer, there are no accidents except in seeming, and what is not known now, what we positively cannot find out at present, no matter how hard we try to discover it, we shall know hereafter. This reply is painfully unsatisfactory to many minds; they are like children, always asking the why and wherefore of everything they see around them, and when their parents do their best to explain, the children cannot understand the answer. Wise parents and teachers never hold back information from their children which they are prepared to profit by; but if immaturity of mind in a child precludes the possibility of his understanding an explanation which would appear perfectly plain to an older member of the family, the difficulty and the veiling are in himself and will be outgrown and vanish as he progresses mentally. It is just so with regard to our celestial tutors; they know and even try to explain to us what we as yet are not sufficiently unfolded to comprehend. It is not their fault, and it is not ours, that we do not see as they see; it is merely a matter of growth; our inexperience is like youth; if it be a misfortune it is one we are sure to outgrow, and when we do outgrow it, then we shall discover that there was no real cause for complaint anywhere at any time, as it was simply with us as it is with fruit; we must all be green and unripe before we arrive at maturity.

The nation, during the past few months, has lost a general who, for two terms President of these United States, won for himself a world-wide reputation for ster-

ling excellence ; his death was a painful and trying one, and far harder for a soldier to endure than any tragic end a warrior could meet on the battle-field ; his life is one we shall all do well to remember, but we must be careful lest we fall into the common error of absurdly eulogizing public men because they are public characters, to the depreciation of the efforts of those whose sphere of action, though far more limited, was none the less important, and whose virtues, though born to bloom almost unseen, were none the less heroic and in some instances even more so. Public and private heroism are alike glorious ; but were we called upon to decide which is the more glorious of the two, we should unhesitatingly affirm the latter. This was the greatness of Grant in his earlier years. Before the eye of all America and Europe was upon him, he earned his title to the name "great ;" before he had heard the flatterer's honeyed tongue pronounce him an illustrious man, before he was the object of universal and sustaining sympathy. It is a lonely fight with evil, danger and adversity that shows what metal men are made of ; those who conquer in the unsuspected fray are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, where motives, not results, as measured by earthly standards, are the criterions of merit. Grant was a noble and industrious man ; he worked his own way to fame ; he rose fairly to the highest pinnacle of ostensible authority in this wide, fair land, and for this he deserves the praises of mankind ; he rests from his earthly labors, and his works follow him. The soldier's and the statesman's path is the cleaner and the brighter because he trod in it ; and from his home in spirit he can smile down upon the world and acknowledge earth's appreciation of his effort by inspiring the coming councillors to act even more wisely and sagaciously than himself. A second great name rises up before us as we recall the more prominent among the celebrated lives which have terminated on earth very recently, — Cardinal McCloskey, the Roman Catholic prelate, who rose to a higher office

in his church than has ever been offered to an American before his appointment to the Cardinal's chair. Though a strict Catholic in the ultramontane sense, he was a lovable and universally beloved man; he had a theology of the heart so deep and true that that of his head seemed to liberal thinkers more an accident of temperament and association than a result of premeditated choice; he was a scholar, an artist, a poet, in that he was possessed of the most exquisite refinement of taste and loftiness of ideal. "If any one in America must be a cardinal, better he than anybody else we know," said many outside the Roman fold. Rome made no mistake in appointing him; he was an honor to the Vatican and did much to endear his religion to the world around. Archbishop Hughes and Cardinal McCloskey are names which will never be mentioned in the future annals of America, except as among those who were indeed members of a holy, universal fold, the spirit of which is infinitely greater than any earthly meed. One circumstance connected with the burial of this good man, and which we deem peculiarly touching, is that though an illustrious dignitary of the Church he is not said to have gone straight from earth to heaven; he must pass through purgatory; the mass must be said for him as well as for the poorest of his flock, for heaven makes no distinction between the wearer of the cardinal's red hat and the bareheaded urchin who dies on a doorstep. Nothing that is not wholly pure can endure heaven's perfect light.

Another figure rises before us whose career was peculiarly connected with the religious history of this city, Dr. Rufus Ellis, pastor of the First Church in Marlborough Street. Surely no one can have an unkind word to say of Dr. Ellis; he was in every respect one of the purest and noblest of men; his was an unusual mind, something after the type of Dr. Martineau's; he was at once conservative and radical. We heard him one Good Friday deliver a sermon in King's Chapel, which embodied the most advanced religious teaching of the age,

and yet his manner and appearance would have been involuntarily associated with a tender, reverent clinging to the unaltered faiths of the fathers, by any who were not privileged to hear the words of thrilling eloquence which fell from his lips ; eloquent he was in the truest sense ; every word he uttered told ; not one was ill-chosen ; still there was not a vestige of the stump orator in his composition ; he was neither declamatory nor impassioned ; he was calm, quiet, sober, earnest, reposeful, but strong in that true strength which arises from deep conviction and a resolute determination to hold back no part of the message he felt it to be his duty to deliver. One remark of his on Christianity seems to us especially worthy of preservation, and it was this : that, of all the phases of Christianity, so called, which come before the world, none is so contemptible as Christianity made easy. That was as much as to say, that if progressive ideas or liberal thoughts are put before the world in the attractive garb of a reason for laxity of morals or an excuse for a life unglorified by a high sense of duty and a resolute adherence to the line of duty, we had far ~~been~~ walk in the old "strait and narrow" tracks. But to Dr. Ellis religious liberalism meant nothing but what made the grip of conscience firmer on the life, and therefore progressive Christianity was not to him the Christianity made easy which he so heartily despised.

There is always something very touching in the picture of one who strives to grasp the past with one hand and the future with the other ; one whose affections bind him to what is going and whose duty calls him to face an unknown something which is coming ; it is always a feeling akin to this that makes parting with loved ones at the final moment of separation so inexpressibly trying to most people when at a death-bed, and often this same feeling occasions sadness to one who is himself about to take a plunge into the mystic Jordan and leave the old familiar life behind. There must always be a feeling of venturesomeness somewhat mingled with curiosity as to

what life can be without the physical body. The departing spirit is a voyager about to navigate an untried sea; he may be confident that he is going to a bright and beautiful country beyond, still he is all the while anxious concerning the issue, and so it must ever be, even in spirit life, until the spirit's eyes are opened so wide that they can penetrate all the mists which envelop the prospect; the mist which veils the mountains of the celestial city is of our own creation; the prospect is indistinct because the spectator's eyes are blurred. When the scales have fully dropped from the eyes of all, then there are no hells, no purgatories, no paradises even, but only heavens in all the boundless universe; then comes the perfect realization of that ineffable beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;" that is, they shall perceive the divine goodness everywhere and in everything. They shall look at nature and see it as it appeared to those most ecstatic of the ancient poets, whose religion was pantheistic only in this sense, that they found the universe so full of God that there was no place for the devil; they walked in light; light was in them and they were in light; they were glow-worms carrying their lamps about with them, and their lamps were part of themselves; yea, they were living creatures full of eyes within and without; they could see behind, before, above, below, within; such spirits are never sad, never perplexed, never confronted with those mysteries, insoluble to those of lesser growth, which create all the distrust of God there is in the world.

It takes ages in the lifetime of a spirit to find God, but when once found God is never lost. To find and to see God is of course in no sense to confront a person; spirits are often asked, "Have you seen God, as you have been passing through the spheres have you met the Great Spirit?" and to all such questions, when addressed to ordinary minds, there can be but one answer, and that a negative one. Those who see God must see with the soul; no vision of a blazing throne of dazzling glory could

constitute that only sight of God which could satisfy the immortal mind; the only vision worthy the name of beatific is a waking up of the interior consciousness to a perfect realization that everything works together for good, that all the awful silences and jarring discords of the universe are harmonies not yet understood; that sin and error and disease are all stepping-stones to something good beyond the evil; that not a sentient creature feels a pang that does not lift it higher in the scale of being; and though forms without number perish hourly in the deadly strife, in all the kingdoms of nature there is a reward for those who suffer, a future existence for animals as well as for men.

We cannot and do not believe that the faithful quadruped who dies of grief on his master's grave, or who yields up his spirit in anguish to save another's life, is unrecompensed; death is not the end of the animal, any more than of man; and sooner or later a revelation will burst upon the world, explaining clearly the hidden wisdom concealed beneath the unpromising exterior of Hindoo transmigration and Pythagorean metempsychosis in such a way as to reconcile the tenderest heart and most exacting mind to the truth of the supremacy of goodness in the universe. Can you, in view of such a revelation, if it ever be made to you, complain because your friends are suffering incidentally to their perfection? Can the angel who sees such a truth clearly weep and sigh because God keeps you at school as long as you need an education, no matter how bitterly you may complain? There can be no perfect satisfaction to any spirit until he has arrived at that point where he knows that the eternal energy which created all things, is a conscious energy whose attributes are perfect love and perfect wisdom. But this is a truth that cannot be taught; it must be experienced. All that a teacher at best can do is to stimulate the soul within you to realize its divinity, as all that the healer can do is to set something in motion within you that heals you. What the New Testament calls

healing and saving faith is not mere belief ; it certainly is the very opposite of credulity ; it is a spiritual force, a divine energy, which thaws the frozen frame, breaks down the barriers and allows the inner life to flow free. This state is one that death can neither give nor take away ; this is the " better resurrection " for which the long line of illustrious ones, mentioned by Paul, were willing to yield up their bodies to savage beasts or devouring flames, knowing that this most glorious inheritance was only to be purchased by a perfect following of conscience and by a complete surrender of all that stood in the way of entire consecration to the highest light received.

We have alluded already to three great representative characters who have travelled toward one terminus by three different routes ; they can all meet, after the night of death, on the resurrection morn which follows death in that true heaven where there are no sects, no parties, no creeds, but only one family, united and harmonious ; in a world where every vestige of selfishness and prejudice is overcome. Do not let us dismiss you with anything approaching the idea that even the noblest have not to go through purgatory, which is only a Roman Catholic expression, signifying a state and process of purification ; and do not think for one moment that your departed friends are beyond the reach of your love and prayers. There is a law of reciprocal action governing all spiritual communion ; if you are benefited by the departed, they are also blessed by you. No love is ever lost ; no tender sympathetic wish can ever fail to produce a beautiful result in quickening the divine flame within the one for whom you pray ; the spontaneous outgoing of the soul to help another is all that there is of true, unselfish, efficacious prayer ; and when prayer is thus comprehended, as Macca-beus declares, it is a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead. The thought, the wish, the desire, is really the prayer ; you must pray, to pray truly, as naturally as you breathe, as naturally as flowers exhale their fragrance, as birds pour forth their songs ; and as you all, with your

different opinions and ideas of right and duty, follow the highest you perceive, and do the best you know, though for long your paths may remain apart, you will be like travellers journeying from Boston to New York, who start from different depots, go by different routes, some by boat and some by train ; but when the morning dawns all find themselves in the same great metropolis. The Jewish steamboats are safe, all three of them, orthodox, moderate, and extreme reform. The Christian boats are safe, Catholic, Episcopal, Baptist, Unitarian, and the old boats of the archaic religions are all safe ; express trains and dull, heavy, lumbering wagons can all go on the road, which, though strait and narrow, is broad enough to carry everything except hypocrisy, selfishness and every other form of iniquity. Get into the boat or train in which you feel most safe and comfortable, but never try to travel alone ; always endeavor to take others with you ; be concerned not about your own personal welfare so much as about the good of the human race at large, and then, not seeking your own salvation, you will so live that salvation is the consequence ; and even though over the heads of some the early dawn of the first glimmering intimation of immortality may not yet have broken, in the darkness as in the light the boats and trains move on, and though yours be an unknown destination, it will surely, if you are faithful, be a glorious one.

WHO AND WHAT IS GOD?

CAN REASON ANSWER THE QUESTION?

THE word "God" is a word that never need be misapplied or misunderstood, and it ought, as it is clearly defined in every dictionary, to be employed only in an intelligible sense by all people who claim to any fair or ordinary amount of education; but as the word "God" is continually being misapplied, persons using it again and again without understanding its significance, or certainly without interpreting it according to any intelligent understanding of etymology, it becomes from time to time necessary to deliver a discourse which we should really think it unnecessary to deliver to an intelligent audience if it were not for the prevailing trash which is continually circulated under the name of liberalism or under the kindred name of free thought.

Now we are the friends and not the foes of every kind of genuine liberalism, but we consider it just as much our duty to protest against the follies and absurdities which are circulated in the name of liberalism as against follies and absurdities of any other kind which are thrust upon the world under the name of orthodox religion. If we are to deal with one class of errors unsparingly, shall we spare the opposite class? because we protest against one extreme and denounce it as injurious to mankind, shall we spare the other extreme and remain silent, while truly liberal ideas are threatened, negatived and denied, while they are called irrational by many who profess and call themselves radicals and progressive minds?

We oftentimes feel called upon in the interests of truth to rebuke such fallacies, and shall continue to do so in the future whenever occasion shall require.

We will never permit ourselves to be bound, neither will we assist others in binding any in the chains of orthodoxy; we will not bow down to the idols of the past because they are ancient, we will not revere the scriptures because they have been worshipped by mankind; but at the same time, intelligent scrutiny is not blind and blatant denial; a spirit of intelligent examination and liberal free thought is, by no means, atheism or materialism, and while we always hope to be liberal, while we trust we shall always be free thinkers, while we must endeavor to be thorough radicals, getting at the root of every matter, while we should be progressionists, ever looking to the future rather than to the past for the highest development of life and the highest conception of duty, we should at the same time be just as careful to seek and to preserve the wheat as we are anxious to destroy the chaff, and while it is our duty to tear down the errors of past ages and rebuke the vices of the world, it is equally our duty to cling firmly to whatsoever is good, and by holding firmly to whatsoever is good we hold firmly to God, the Eternally Good One, the Author and Preserver of the universe.

We have quite often attended conferences and heard and read lectures delivered for the purpose of convincing the public, ourselves included, that there is no God; and we must say that we left the conference rooms satisfied that David was a very wise man when he said "the fool hath said in his heart there is no God," for there was neither sound argument, nor logic, nor radicalism, nor true rationalism, nor progressive free thought, neither was there any genuine liberality about the whole affair; nothing more than a sensational protest against certain antiquated dogmas; a tirade against some of the self-evident errors of conservatism which all advanced thinkers, both Jews and Gentiles, have long, long ago denounced. Now if you wish to view the ground that has been taken by the most advanced free thinkers of years gone by and of the present time you will, no doubt, refer with a considerable amount of pleasure to Thomas Paine and his

Age of Reason; you will, doubtless refer to the works of Voltaire and of others who were prominent among the French Deists during the period of the French Revolution at the close of the last century; you will probably study the best German authors, Emanuel Kant, Strauss, and many others, who are justly renowned as being some of the profoundest contributors to the thought of the modern world; all these men have come to the conclusion that there has been no divinely infallible revelation of God ever made to the world through any book or books or through any man or men. But they have all been out and out Theists or uncompromising Deists. There is no atheism, not even a single line of atheistic tendency in the works of Thomas Paine; all candid readers admit there is not a single line of atheism in the Age of Reason, though its author has been denounced as an infidel and often called an atheist; no one who has read Thomas Paine's works can possibly come to the conclusion that he was even of atheistic tendency; at celebrations of the anniversary of the birth of Thomas Paine we are continually reminded that he protested against the errors of the age, but we are never led to infer by any one that has intelligently read his writings, that he was anything other than a Deist; his biographers inform us that he was president of the Theo-philanthropical Society in Paris, and was one of the brightest ornaments of the French school of Deists. There was a man who did not believe in the Bible, there was a man who did not believe in churches, priests, Catholicism, Protestantism, or any of the other isms of the world; there was a man who took his stand upon nature, who interrogated nature; it was nothing claiming to be supernatural, it was no church, it was universal nature that said to Thomas Paine, there is a God, and we are bold enough to affirm that nature says so to-day. Ask us why we believe in God? Because we employ our reason; because we use our intellect; because we employ the power to argue logically which has been given to us by the Eternal Mind, the Great Master of the universe. We

do not believe in God because we find that God was believed in by the ancients. We do not believe in God because of any belief in the infallibility or perfect accuracy of the Bible, for we have no such belief; we do not believe in God because when we peruse all the scriptures of the world together we find that they all teach the existence of a Supreme Being. We believe in God because our own common sense tells us that there is a God, and as we believe in God from the standpoint of common sense, not all the denial in the world, not all the folly on earth that is put forth in the name of liberal sentiment (in reality most *illiberal*), will ever cause us to give up the position which we take as rational beings. We commend to those who are really studying and endeavoring to answer the question, who and what is God? an essay written by Andrew Jackson Davis and published in the "Spiritual Offering" at Ottumma, Iowa. The title of the essay is "God revealed to intellect." Mr. Davis says there came a time in his experience when he lost all his old belief in deity and stood alone in nature finding no satisfaction for the spiritual cravings of his being. One day when pondering over Plato, his favorite author, he struck the words "God geometrizes," whereupon he immediately set to work to discover whether Plato was demonstrably right or not. He says that as he applied geometrical rules and conversed with nature as a mathematician, he found that the grand old philosopher of Greece who had uttered those two most memorable words more than two thousand years ago, had uttered a truth which was absolutely verifiable to-day.

Mr. Davis says that he has subjected his essay for critical examination to the best minds of Boston, to those who deny God as well as to those who affirm the divine existence, and that not one has been able to point out a flaw in his system of reasoning. He candidly admits that if a flaw had been pointed out to him, he would immediately have abandoned his argument if he could not have rectified it. He says that his geometrical argument in favor of the existence of God, which is a purely natural

one, can be discussed with any one who understands the principles of algebra sufficiently, but that a revelation of God to man's intellect is a revelation which, of course, cannot be made to an intellect which is not sufficiently expanded to receive such a truth. In endorsing such a statement, we of course make no more extraordinary a statement than when we say a certain color cannot be revealed to an eye that is not sufficiently developed to discern it, nor a sound to an ear that is not sufficiently trained to hear it, nor a flavor to a palate not sensitive enough to taste it; neither an odor to nostrils which cannot smell it. There must be intellectual qualification on the part of an individual, or there can be no demonstration to him of any mathematical problem; so if God can be revealed to intellect, if God can be known as one who geometrizes, as the great Grecian philosopher said, and if the geometrical arrangement of nature is perfectly conclusive evidence to a philosopher of the existence of a Divine Mind, then our intellect must necessarily be able to cope with the problem; but, if an individual mind is incompetent, however sound the rule may be for its solution, it will remain unsolved by us.

Remember that this argument is not original with Mr. Davis. He says himself that it was suggested to his mind by Plato, and as Plato lived twenty-three hundred years ago it has been in the world at least twenty-three centuries, and how long before the time of Plato no one knows. Without doubt it was known to the people of the most ancient prehistoric races whose remains are now under the depths of the ocean, and whose works abound amid the deserts and show themselves in the ruined places of the entire world at this hour. We know this argument has been refuted, or rather an ineffectual endeavor has been made to refute it, by saying, Now, you claim that the power to geometrize, the power of a mathematician, is a power that is only possessed by mind and by a very high order of mind; well, but are there not insects that possess this power of mind? Are there not many little creatures very low down in the scale of or-

ganic life that construct their habitations and do their business in accordance with geometrical rules? Is it not true that this power is to be found in animals far below man? Well, it is asked, are you going to give credit for such wonderful intellectual power to the spider? are you ready to attribute amazing intellectuality to little creatures that burrow in the earth? Our answer is, We do not attribute the power of geometrization to them as originators of such power; we attribute the power itself only to the Eternal life that governs and directs them and moves them to act instinctively. There is a weak point in the objector's argument, there may be no reasoning power in the animal, but there is instinct, and instinct is reflected intelligence. The spider is not necessarily a reasoner, but the spider is guided by unerring instinct; so is the beaver. The honeybee and the swallow are not necessarily reasoners, but they are guided by instinct superior to that of man. They are able to foretell what the weather will be when men are not. Now, we cannot suppose for a moment that a superior intellectual power resides in them; they certainly do not generate a superior reasoning ability to that of the human family, but they are mediums in nature for the display of a divine reasoning intelligence that permeates nature. If you ask us, "When you speak of God, do you mean man on a large scale, a personality? Do you mean a great being seated upon a glorious throne somewhere in the distant heavens? Is your conception anthropomorphic?" We answer no, and if we are referred to the Bible we persist in treating the Bible fairly, we persist in treating it exactly as we treat the poems of Shakespeare and Byron, the Illiad of Homer, or any other specimens of literature.

Now let us approach the Jewish Bible, and deal with this Bible fairly, neither prejudiced in its favor, nor against it, neither to specially plead in its behalf nor to decry it. Let us see what the Bible really says concerning God. Every scholar knows that many different Hebrew terms employed in the Bible have been translated

"the Lord," and also that many different Hebrew words have been translated "God." Now in some modern translations, when the word in the Hebrew means the Eternal Being, in English the word God is written in three capital letters, GOD. Whenever these three capitals are used, the Hebrew signifies the Eternal Being. They constitute only the translation into English of the Hebrew word meaning The Eternal. Then when a mighty angel is made mention of, the word when translated reads "God," which signifies a highly-exalted personal being, the guardian angel of a planet, for instance. Then there is another term where no capital letter is employed at all. The word in that case is god, which always should be written in three small letters, where a simple human being or human spirit is signified; gods and goddesses were human beings. The various divinities of mythology were never confounded by the learned with the Eternal Being, whose name should be written with three capitals; they did not signify even mighty angels or archangels, rulers of worlds, whose names should be spelt with one capital letter. They signified merely the rulers of ancient times.

There was a period when all countries were said to have been ruled by the gods. If you study the history of Egypt you are told that before the Ptolemies were the Pharaohs, but before the Pharaohs were the gods. Now those gods that ruled over Egypt were merely highly intelligent and wonderfully endowed men, and when in the New Testament Jesus says anything about the many gods believed in in his day, he does not say they did not exist; he does not say they were merely imaginary; but he says "they were called gods upon whom the spirit of God came." Various words in the original having distinctly different meanings and signifying entirely different beings have (unfortunately for clearness of interpretation) been erroneously conformed in translations of ancient manuscripts over and over again. Now in the earliest chapters of Genesis we find there are two entirely distinct accounts of creation. One is termed by scholars the Elohist, and

the other the Jehovistic. The Jehovistic account says that God, the Eternal, created heaven and earth and indeed everything, while the Elohist account declares that the world was made by *Elohim* or inferior divinities. Mention is made in the Kabala of various orders of spirits ruling the universe under direction of the Supreme Being who is called in the Kabala En Soph, which means absolute wisdom or the infinitely wise. These divinities are very elaborately defined in many curious treatises and commentaries upon the Bible. The Supreme Being guards and controls the spheres and directs all things through intermediary intelligences, called in the Kabala *Sephiroth*, and though the Israelites by reason of the rigid monotheism of the system of Moses were commanded to worship the Eternal and the Eternal only, they were not told that multitudes of gods did not exist; they were only told that they must not worship them. They were not permitted to offer sacrifices to them, they were not allowed to pay them any divine honors, they must not blindly obey them in anything. In the first commandments of the decalogue the wording means, The Eternal, thy God, is the only One whom thou shalt serve; the correct rendering into English of the Massoretic text is always "The Eternal, thy God," which should always be employed instead of the Lord thy God; as in English the word Eternal is much more forcible than Lord, signifying the Eternal Being as distinguished from all the gods. You will remember in the Psalms it is said, the Lord Eternal is a great King above all gods, meaning that all the gods whom he was above were merely human beings whether in the material form or in spirit life, who were worshipped by the ancients in what is usually termed their ancestor worship. Now when we remember that the word "lord" is employed constantly to designate an English nobleman and that there are a great many lords in England to-day, — there is a House of Lords, the Upper House of British Parliament, — if we use the word "lord" so very loosely to-day, why should we wonder at its very loose usage among the ancients? "My lord, the

King," is an expression very often used both in prose and poetry, but of course the intention was never for a moment that the earthly king was the Eternal Being, the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

We always feel that a great many troublesome misunderstandings arise through the extreme poverty of languages; we consider that it is a great mistake not to have separate and distinctive words always employed in a determined sense. There ought to be a special word for every separate idea; there should be no two ideas expressed by the same word. When we have a perfect language, we shall, no doubt, have gathered from all the languages of the earth and have enriched our language until it may have hundreds of thousands of words, so that there may be a word for every idea, no matter how many ideas we have to express; ambiguity in speech will therefore be removed. All that we can do at present, by way of honest commentary and research in the field of man's idea of Deity, is to endeavor honestly to find out what the opinions of the world really have been concerning God and concerning gods. Now, when we are perusing the Old Testament, we find ourselves informed that God never has been seen by any man. "No man has seen the Eternal One at any time," is a text often quoted, and there is not a Hebrew scholar in the world who would not tell you that this is the correct interpretation of the passage. There is not a learned Jewish rabbi anywhere who would not tell you that the Eternal One is the correct expression. No one has seen the Eternal at any time; here is a statement that cannot be refuted, no one has ever seen the Eternal Being. But you have often been told in the Scriptures that people have seen the lords and the gods. Why, of course they have, if they have seen earthly rulers and held communion with spiritual beings, and the ancients were all acquainted with some phases of Spiritualism. You none of you claim that you have seen the Eternal because you have seen an English nobleman; but if you are a member of the Church of England, when you pray you say, "O, Lord,"

and when you speak to a nobleman you say, "My Lord." Here again is a most forcible exemplification of poor language; here is the same word standing for two very distinct ideas; but it is beneath contempt for persons claiming liberality and intelligence to quibble about words when they know that ideas are what we want if we are to learn anything; but to get to the root of a matter and see that ideas are represented correctly instead of misrepresented is surely the duty of every right-minded person. In the second commandment we are told that God has no known form; there the word when correctly rendered is "Eternal." If persons would attend Jewish synagogues often enough to hear the children examined once, they would learn that every Hebrew child is taught to say "the Eternal" and not "the Lord" thy God. The Eternal can have no form to man's knowledge, having never been seen by man and never compared, when the decalogue is obeyed, to anything in heaven above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Does it not appear strange that many people claiming to be spiritualists and even claiming to be mediums, telling you at the present moment that they see a great many spirits, should be so absurd as not to recognize accounts of experiences similar to their own when they come across them in ancient literature? They tell you that they see a great many persons out of the flesh; they tell you further that they hold communion with a great many spirits who have once lived on earth. If they do, why should not the ancients have had communion with spirits? If people see spirits to-day why should not people have seen them many hundreds of years ago? If they see spirits materialized in their seance rooms to-day, and they take hold of them, why should not people hundreds or thousands of years ago have done the same thing? Surely the spiritualists, of all people, ought to understand the claim which the ancients made of seeing various gods and lords. Because you see a spirit do you say you have seen the Eternal Being? Do you consider that because some one has been a lord, or a ruler or

a governor, he is the Eternal Being? surely you do not. When some mind superior to your own makes itself manifest to you, do you say that that being is the Eternal? Certainly not. Then why not allow the light of modern spiritualism to shine in and explain the Bible? But instead of doing so, many grope blindly on in the darkness of ignorant denunciation and falsify most ridiculously the records of olden times. Such people usually understand nothing whatever of Hebrew and nothing whatever of the history of ancient spiritualism; they merely blindly and blatantly deny what their own philosophy and their own phenomena, which they undertake to elucidate on their own platforms, can adequately and very simply explain. The spiritual philosophy together with the spiritual phenomena of the present age can explain the mystery of Bible spiritualism perfectly. It is certain that there were many spiritualists and mediums thousands of years ago and that they used to see spirits just as clairvoyant mediums do to-day. No one who has read history can deny that there have been spiritualists and people claiming to be mediums in all ages and in all countries. Well, then what should you do with the gods of the ancients? You certainly cannot maintain that the Jewish scriptures, always declaring that there is only one Supreme Being, would admit that the Supreme Being was divided into a great many sections; yet when Saul went to consult the woman of En-Dor she said, I see gods coming up out of the earth. What did she mean? She simply had a vision of the spirits of those who had, no doubt, been buried in those localities and who were still connected with the earth or earthbound, and therefore frequented burying grounds. She said, I see gods, but she only meant ancient rulers. Saul would think naturally when she said, I see gods, that she saw several of the rulers or representative men of Israel who had quitted their mortal bodies. The word is gods, which you will notice is plural, so you will find it used over and over again. It would be really an insult to an intelligent audience, if it were not for the folly of

some who claim to be teachers of liberal philosophy, to refer at this late day to the Bible for the sake of proving what no intelligent person who has studied it thoughtfully with modern light has ever thought of denying. That the Old Testament teaches the existence of one Supreme Spirit, ineffable, eternal, whom no one has seen at any time, and who is not to be worshipped by any outward similitudes, and also the existence of any number of angels and human souls of various orders, Sephiroth, as they are termed in the Kabala, is a fact unquestioned by any genuine scholar. You know that the Kabalistic idea was always that the Supreme Being ruled the world by means of various orders of angels who were agents or messengers of God ; the forms of these angels were revealed to ancient seers who said they constituted gradations in the spiritual world, just as spiritualists say to-day that the spiritual spheres are graded, that there are so many spheres (seven is the number usually mentioned), so many distinct orders of beings, so many pretty clearly defined abodes and states of mind in spirit life which you might classify into some less and some more glorious worlds, all verging at length into realms of perfect blessedness. Now, this idea of various orders of spirits and various spheres in spirit life was entertained very largely by the ancient Israelites, whose thought was much in harmony with the old Egyptian ideas to be found in "the book of the dead" of a great many intelligences between the earth and the sun. Osiris, worshipped in Egypt as the angel who dwelt in the sun, was never thought to be the Supreme Eternal Being, but only a messenger of the Supreme Being, just as in the Orient, Buddha was only regarded as a messenger ; among the Brahmans, the Eternal Being was called Brahm ; Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, being only manifestations of divine attributes. The divine incorporeality and immutability has always been insisted upon in the East. To personify God is, however, necessary if we are to comprehend the idea of God, that is if we are to intellectually comprehend God ; but we beg of you to remember that

we make a very great distinction between the words "comprehend" and "apprehend;" we say that if we are to intellectually comprehend God, that is, if our thought is to compass God, to fully understand, so as to measure God, we must have an anthropomorphic idea; but if, on the other hand, we are only to employ our highest reason, aided by our spiritual intuition, we can soar to infinite heights above the anthropomorphic ideas of both the past and present in the acknowledgment of one Eternal Being whose life is the life of all the universe, and who controls and governs all things by his indwelling presence.

There are many people who seem afraid of the idea of pantheism, even of the most highly refined and spiritual pantheism, because it seems to take away from them the reality and objectivity of the Divine Being. Dr. Gordon of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, of this city, recently brought out a protest against what is termed Christian Science on the ground that Mrs. Eddy denied the existence of a personal God, which seemed to him a very great reason for offence. When Mrs. Eddy replied in her pamphlet entitled, "A Defence of Christian Science," she endeavored to tell Dr. Gordon that she meant that there was something so great in the Divine Existence that it was impossible to personify God, because directly you personify Him you must conceive the idea of something outside of, or beyond God. Now what is that something that is outside of God? A personal idea must necessarily be less than a universal idea. Here is a person; well, a person has dimensions, and outside of those dimensions there must be something. A person cannot occupy the whole universe. A person, as we understand it, can be only an outward form, because the word "person" is derived from the Latin word "persona," which means a mask, and therefore a personal appearance is not an appearance of the soul in its real nature but only the appearance of a mask. Every one knows that a person often meant the actor who wore a mask in the old plays, and of course the mask was

only employed as a symbol of the material body; a great many spiritual thinkers of olden times saw an inward body also. That which we see with the outward eye, which may be correctly termed the *personnel*, is not the real being, but only his outward personality or mask which is thrown aside at death, while the real individual still remains. Now really a personal God would mean a masked God, a God who wears a veil, and as we often only see God's veil and generally do not see behind, it is with us and God as it is with us in relation to our fellow beings; we see the body but we do not see the soul; we see the face but we do not generally read the character; we hear the outward voice but we do not hear the music of the thought; we gaze upon an expression of the features but we are not able to come face to face with all the glorious sublimities of the indwelling mind. No one can say that man has seen God at any time, but you can say no man has seen man at any time. You have never with the eye of flesh beheld man. You have only gazed upon a shadow. You may say truly that no man has ever been seen in reality with the bodily eye. If you see the real man at all you must see with the soul, and all we can see with the soul is the indestructible, the eternal life. Pope said very wisely, God is the soul and nature the body, nature is not God but it is the result of God's existence.

Now, having said so much concerning the existence of the divine life in nature and the divine impersonality, or rather we would say the divine super-personality, as the word impersonality is rather a derogatory term, as you can regard all inanimate things as impersonal; but when you speak of super-personality you mean more than personality, while impersonality means less than personality. Is my body greater than my mind, or is my mind greater than my body? Is not the mind more than the body, is not the body more than the raiment? and as the mind is more than the body is not the spiritual individuality more than the physical personality?

It is positively ridiculous for persons to speak of God

as "it," though we have heard many people speak of God as "it;" they no longer say "he," no longer "him," but it is "it!" now no one needs to be told that "it" is something inferior to "he" or "she," "him" or "her." You can speak of a rug or a chair as "it," but any lady or gentleman would be very much insulted if called "it." If you were to speak of an animal even, you would correctly speak of any living creature as "he" or "she," an animal having both intelligence and sex; the neuter is that which has no life. It is neither masculine nor feminine. A pronoun that could be rightfully applied to The Eternal Being or even to an angel should signify both male and female; the Eternal Fount from which both male and female flow, must certainly be masculine and feminine, and certainly not inanimate.

The tendency of a great deal of so-called liberal and radical thought is towards the very lowest form of fetichism, the very lowest phase of fetichism is coming down upon us when we find our God in "it." Now, if you call such kind of progress advancement, you must imitate a crab, which walks backwards; if you progress far enough in a neuter direction you will get on to a plane with the lowest, the most rudimentary intelligence upon the earth that ever assumed human form, and then you will find people naturally worshipping "it;" the fetich does worship sticks and stones, he does believe in the unconsciousness of Deity. This is what the glorious progress of infidelity is leading to; it is carrying us down to the very lowest depths of the most degraded and barbarous fetichism, to the worship of mud, the worship of dust, or to assume a more scientific guise, the worship of protoplasm. Very likely in time people will pray to the dust of the ground, and if they believe dust is man's beginning and ending, why not? In a little while some people will have so far outgrown all recognition of intelligence in the universe that they will worship dust altogether, and those do worship it practically who care for nothing save mammon. Such is the tendency of materialism, and there are no materialists in the world who can prove to the

contrary. The tendency of materialism is to affirm that everything is matter; we are dust and to dust we return; we have all originated in dust and shall all go back to dust. Materialism is nothing but the deification of dust, and of the worship of dust we find plenty among the educated inhabitants of even cultured Boston; but there is a great and lamentable absence of real culture where materialism prevails; wherever there is an absence of the highest, that is spiritual culture, you will find a great deal of pretentious and fashionable philosophy of knowing nothing politely called agnosticism; this fashionable philosophy of knowing nothing may be well until we know something, but to call it advancement, or style it progress, is to prostitute the most beautiful words in the language. There is no room for it where opportunities for spiritual culture are not neglected, there is no reason for us to be agnostics, there is no real intelligence displayed in a journey toward feticism. Materialism is in no sense responsible for the good that certain people do who are materialists. No one does any good because he is an atheist, but many atheists do good because they have philanthropic feelings in them which are not atheistic feelings at all, but rather purely humanitarian impulses common to human nature, neither created nor destroyed by creeds. Such people are kind-hearted, but kind-heartedness is not atheism, nor agnosticism; they may be just, but justice is not a result of atheism; they may do much good, because they possess many virtues, but virtue is not atheism. Atheism itself never did anybody any good and never will, but many people who are afflicted with the fashionable modern disease of agnosticism and are rapidly drifting toward atheism have, nevertheless, some sound parts to which the disorder has not penetrated, and the parts which are not afflicted with the disorder do a great deal of good; but the same people could do more good and would succeed far better in their laudable enterprises, if they could outgrow their malady. Materialism, however, is a great deal more intelligent than materialistic spiritualism, because materialism is

logical, and granting its premises, it lands us where we know at a glance that it must. The materialist says there is no God. Then what is the source of all things? he replies, it is altogether unconscious. There is a law, there is a force, there is a fate, there is a destiny, there is a something, but it is all blind and unconscious and we ourselves are only manifestations of the unconscious; developed out of dust, we shall go back to dust when our body, which has given birth to our spirit (and our spirit is only a condition of matter), returns to its native element; our spirit will be destroyed when our body is destroyed; destroy the body and you destroy the spirit. There is a perfectly logical deduction, granting the premises. Materialists say that everything springs out of matter, that matter when arranged in a certain form produces life. Well, then if life is produced by a certain arrangement of matter, break up that arrangement of matter and life is extinct.

But for a spiritualist to say that the individual human spirit goes on living after the death of the body, to declare the spirit is immortal, that you can destroy the material body and yet the spirit continues to live, and at the same time to declare that everything, spirit included, is an evolution out of matter, is to make a declaration that no intelligent mind can accept. If we regard the soul as independent of the body, if we say with the philosophers the soul always was, is, and ever will be, that the soul is an independent entity, that the soul is the author of the body and that the body is only the *persona* or the mask, and that when it is laid aside the soul itself remains in all its beauty, that the soul only develops the material form in order that it may gain an experience, regarding matter merely as a means for unfolding or expressing the attributes of mind, we have made an intelligent definition that we can understand. If, as concordant with the doctrine of human immortality, the spirit lives after the body is destroyed, then it existed before the body came into being. If the spirit is to exist forever, the body certainly did not create it, as a temporary evanescent form cannot

create an immortal essence. If the mind is to live as long as eternal ages roll, then that mind can say, "My father and my mother is the great Eternal Spirit, the body is only a creature that has relation to the rudimentary stages of my experience; my advent upon the earth was for my discipline; I was never shaped from dust, I was never protoplasm, but my action upon external substance produced the animalculæ upon which sciolism vainly endeavors to postulate my origin."

The existence of a Supreme Mind, an all-governing intelligence in nature, is an axiomatic fact to every mind that is capable of comprehending it. Every studious observer of nature can exclaim, "I turn my eyes to the starry heavens, and 'the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork!'" I do not care so far as the evidences of the existence of God are concerned whether you burn all the Bibles in the world, or whether you preserve them; I do not care whether you give children any religious teaching or whether you do not. I declare that the existence of God will affirm itself. I never believed in God because I found God mentioned in the Bible. Why should we believe in God because a book tells us of him? The Bible is like every other book; when the Bible is ridiculed and laughed to scorn we stand up and defend it, and then some "liberal-minded" people tell us that we worship the Bible. That is what we expect from "liberal-minded" people always, or rather those that call themselves liberal. Those who are liberal in reality will show themselves liberal by their liberal works and words.

If you examine the Bible you find that it is very much like all other ancient literature. Supposing a person were to get up and make an ignorant speech against Homer's Iliad, would it not be reasonable enough for any one to get up and defend the Iliad, though not to the extent of saying that the man or men who wrote it were infallible, but emphatically to declare that they were really not the ignoramuses they were represented to be? On the other hand, if some worshipper of Shakespeare should

claim that he was inspired in every word that he wrote, would you not be justified in saying that he was imperfect, and that he was in no sense the deity he was made out to be. We may surely take the ground that the attitude taken by the Bible haters of to-day is neither intelligent nor correct. Everybody who has studied the history of the Bible knows perfectly well that the Bible came to be worshipped at a time when scarcely any person could read or write, and people who could read and write were acknowledged as divine beings because of their superior attainments. They used to write in the very rudest manner. Their mode of writing was by making mysterious hieroglyphic scratches upon various articles; then at length they employed parchment, and wrote the characters upon this parchment. Writing was a very rare art, a very exceptional attainment; only the most learned were able to write, and as a very great expenditure was necessary both in order to produce and to preserve anything in writing, very few events were recorded. Only the very best thoughts of the very greatest thinkers were ever committed to writing. In such times when people wrote anything they were accounted as almost superhuman, for no one could write at all, except a remarkably learned person, and when they did write, they surely did not write down cheap nonsense, writing being far too expensive a luxury to be desecrated to any such frivolous end. Only the best thoughts of the greatest thinkers were recorded, and while of course writers were not infallible, and while of course the mutilation of many writings caused a great many serious errors to creep into the ancient text, the literature of the ancient world was idolized because of its scarcity and because of its being the product solely of the most intelligent men of ancient periods. Now, to ridicule the Bible, or to say that it is opposed to common sense, or to bow down to the Bible blindly and to accept it as the infallible word of God, proves the person who commits either of the above follies to be very ignorant. The Bible was written like every other book that is old; it was written in cipher and after-

wards translated into modern languages. It contained at the time of its production the most advanced thought and the deepest truths which the people of that age possessed.

Therefore, the Bible should be studied, not with the object of picking it to pieces, but rather for the sake of inquiring into what our ancestors believed. It is at least a valuable curiosity as a literary work ; much of it is without doubt an allegorical history of past ages. If we can approach it without believing it to be absolutely divine we can then deal with it in the same critical way in which we can deal with Shakeapeare. The Bible is neither the mass of falsities that a great many people pretend that it is, nor the infallible word of God ; but all Bibles contain a spiritual meaning and have come down to us as heir-looms from the past, giving us an insight into the beliefs and customs of our ancestors. Now, two views of Deity that are continually presented all through the Bible may be said to have arisen in the two natural founts from which all learning sprang ; these fountains take their rise in diametrically opposite directions ; therefore the two ideas of God are very distinct. The one idea of God starts away up in the heavens, and strain our eyes as much as we will, we cannot see far enough to know where that idea of God first originated. That is the so-called revealed idea. Now revelation is only discovery, and just as only a few of you may by the aid of a very powerful telescope turn your eyes to the distant heavens and behold a star that cannot be seen without the telescope, so there may have been but a few minds upon the earth in days of old who were so superior to other minds, so far more inspired and also far more intellectual who could turn the telescope of their souls to the far-distant spiritual heavens and be able to see the light and glory that no others could comprehend. The highest idea of God came down to the world from heaven ; not that God arbitrarily singled out a person here and there and let him know the truth while He hid that truth from the rest of mankind, but there have always been a few souls on the earth who

stand like mountains above the surrounding hills, and because they are higher than all the rest, catch the first glorious beams of the morning sunshine of truth; these are true teachers and inspirers, leaders of the people, wherever they may be found. Here is the revelation from heaven that some few advanced beyond their time receive; these leading minds ever catch glimpses of the glory of the universe which others cannot see.

Now the other idea of God gradually crept up from below. Barbaric, savage people felt their way into recognition of some power beyond them. They felt the existence of a power above them in all nature, but they chiefly associated it with everything that overcame and distressed them; thus their worship was a worship of fear. It was a worship naturally accompanied with dreadful sacrificial rites, a worship of intimidation and of dread, a worship that naturally took upon itself the forms of the lion, the tiger and the serpent, and called them gods because of their great destructive powers. There are the two ideas; the one idea comes to earth as a golden thread of spiritual involution, as a ladder down which angels have stooped to earth. The other idea begins very low down in the intellect of the most savage people and gradually rises higher and higher as the quicksilver rises in the thermometer in obedience to the pressure of increasing heat.

These two ideas of God, the one which has been termed an idea of revelation, and the other which has been termed an idea of natural religion, are both a perfect unit. They are indeed both of them wholly natural, but, as Rev. J. M. Savage said at the anniversary of the Free Religious Association in 1885, no one can look at anything from any higher standpoint than the one that his own development at the time enables him to take. This view is now almost universal among genuine religious liberals. Mind is in nature; mind it is that maps out the glorious heavens, mind it is that strews the earth with beautiful flowers, mind it is that works ever in perfect harmony with the highest known principles of the highest

known science, which intelligence has ever made a human discovery; but to tell me that I came from something lower than myself is to tell me that immortality is of mortal birth, which is logically absurd; to tell me that nature is everything, is to employ a mere vague term which signifies "something born" according to its derivation from the Latin, to tell me that I have come from a material source is to tell me what my reason refuses to accept. I am a theist because my reason compels me to be such. I am a theist because my intelligence compels me to admit there is a Supreme Being I call God, the infinitely good. There must be an all-knowing Mind, there must be an Eternal Spirit; by searching you cannot find out the universe in all its perfection, by searching you cannot discover every star, by searching you cannot find the limits of space, because there is a limit to our intelligence and therefore there is a limit to our discovery; but as our intelligence is ever advancing, and as mind is ever speaking to mind, spirit ever informing spirit concerning its immortal existence, we look forward to a glorious future when the children of earth will be so educated by a great wave of intuitive revelation through their own souls, that their minds, freely exploring the mysteries teaching them of universal life, will go up in thought beyond the canopy of heaven and listen to the music of spheres in all its eternal harmony; gaze on the lamps in the glorious firmament of immortality, and ever learning more and more of the wonders of nature, hear them all forever singing as they shine, shouting in glorious unison, "The hand that made us and supports us is divine."

Temples of the Living God.

IN this age when almost every one appears somewhat interested in the cause of religion, either affirmatively or negatively, it is peculiarly appropriate for all that are engaged in the study of ethics to consider how far religion and morality, or religion and the practical welfare of mankind, are connected.

There is, without doubt, a religious instinct in human nature, and that instinct has made itself manifest in the erection of temples of worship in all lands and in the formation of every variety of idols and images, and while many persons suppose that outside of Judaism and Christianity there never could be anything but heathenish worship of the blind forces of nature, or foolish idolatry of sticks and stones, those who are studying to-day with a view to formulate religion agreeably to themselves or are making comparative theology their theme are daily shaking hands with the China, India, Egypt, Persia, Babylonia, Ethiopia, Nubia and Central America of long ago, with Greece and Rome as they were before the advent of Christianity; in a word, with all the nations and lands which have figured in past history. All nations erect temples, not only to their tutelary spirits, not only to those inferior divinities, who are often termed Elohim, not only to those gods whom they considered like themselves in that they shared human attributes and passions, but also to "the unknown God," to the Eternal Being, whom they ignorantly worshipped, but whom nevertheless they felt after and endeavored to find. There are many persons to-day who consider that with the establishment of Christianity, the worship of "the unknown God" en-

tirely ceased and that God was revealed to the world as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost by the disciples of Jesus in the first century, and that from that day to this there has been no longer any occasion for persons to doubt that there has been an absolute revelation from God to man. The orthodox Jew, of course, dates religion back to Moses and to God's revelation made to Abraham before the time of Moses, and declares that Israel's monotheistic conception of Deity was the first and only positive revelation of God granted to humanity.

The orthodox Israelite has never been in any doubt concerning the authority of the Old Testament as the word and the will of God. The claim of Christianity differs from that of Judaism only by the addition of an after revelation through Jesus the Christ.

There have always been multitudes of people who have found no satisfaction whatever in what has been termed a revelation from God to man. A revelation on paper is no revelation to those who cannot read what is written on the paper, no revelation to those who cannot understand what is written, no revelation to those whose minds are not prepared to accept it.

A revelation to be a revelation must be a demonstration of truth to the individual, and unless the witness of the spirit within testifies to the appealing spirit without there is no divine revelation, because in that case there is no discovery of anything by the individual, and divine truth is never revealed to us until we discover it; no matter what may be our extraneous theory of divine revelation. Divine revelation considered practically instead of theoretically must be a question of human discovery. If you show me a picture you may be responsible for presenting it before my gaze, and I may have to thank you for doing so, and if it had not been your will to show it to me, I might never have seen it; but the fact of your holding it before me will not give me eyesight, it will not bestow upon me intelligence, it will not endow me with

powers of appreciation, for though you hold a picture before me for years, unless my eyes can see, and my mind can comprehend it, you have made no revelation to me. I must myself understand and receive the revelation. I must discover what you display before me; I must be able to gaze upon it and drink in the beauty of what is there depicted, for if I cannot, then revelation to me is an unknown quantity.

In every age of the world there have been some people who have received a great deal of light and truth from the Bible and also from religious ceremonies, while many others have found no light and no truth in either.

Many people are, phrenologically speaking, so highly developed in the organs of veneration, sublimity, ideality and spirituality, that they naturally respond to an appeal whenever it is made to the spiritual side of their nature. Others there are, so lamentably deficient in these faculties that many an appeal which has proved thoroughly satisfactory to others is altogether unsatisfactory to them. This is pre-eminently the case at the present time and will continue to be so until all men are equally developed on the spiritual side of their nature. It is universally acknowledged with regard to the material world that a company of people must all have equally good eyesight in order to see an equal number of objects and an equal number of colors and to see them equally well. We acknowledge that people must be equally developed in hearing or they are not able to discriminate equally between the same number of sounds and to hear them with equal distinctness. We acknowledge that in tasting and touching and smelling, we must be equally developed in the direction of certain senses, or we cannot taste an equal number of flavors, smell an equal number of odors, or detect the difference by feeling between the textures of a number of different substances. It is universally admitted in the world that a trained ear hears many more sounds than one untrained; man hears more

than a monkey and a monkey more than many other animals.

When we apply these facts to the question of varied developments of spiritual powers and enquire how we may best develop our psychical faculties, we arrive at a point where we at once perceive the object of what may be termed moral and religious culture; we all know that our ability to see a certain number of colors at present does not determine our ability to see only a certain number forever; our inability to hear more than a given number of sounds does not argue that we are never to hear any more; you can so pay attention to the culture of eyesight and hearing that you improve eyesight and increase hearing, you can turn your attention to muscular development with the result that persons having originally very weak, poor muscles obtain very fine ones by proper training; a feeble constitution is often built up and converted into a strong one, physiologists declaring that by exercise muscles can be strengthened and general health improved. Now when we approach the spiritual side of human nature, we naturally ask whether any means can be devised for more perfectly unfolding man's spiritual nature. Is it not necessary for the welfare of man, for the well-being of society and that law and order may prevail, that persons should develop the spiritual side of their being, and is not money really well and economically spent which is given to the culture of human morals?

There are many people who claim that religion is valuable only as a restraining power and that clergymen, or priests, are needed as policemen and soldiers are needed. They point to an Irish mob and remark how quickly a single priest can quell it. The priest runs among the crowd and they are silent immediately, for a "man of God" is there and they fear the thunderbolts of heaven if they rebel against his authority.

In a degraded condition of society the awe-inspiring

priest is necessary just as a constable is necessary in the absence of a more spiritual person capable of employing a more spiritual method for quelling it, when a broil is at its height.

If you turn to the play of "Leah," which is frequently performed in this city, you will find that the restraining influence of Christianity has been correctly depicted in the appearance of the priest with the cross in his hand; when he holds up the cross all the people bow down; they were about to commit a deed of violence but were restrained instantly by the sight of a cross. It is of no use to argue or remonstrate with an infuriated populace, but let the priest go among them and hold up the cross to them and they are cowed at once. They dared not attack a harmless maiden when they were told not to do so by the priest who lifted up the cross, for the cross is to them at once an object of love and fear. If they love the cross then they will not sin against what they love; if they fear the cross then they dare not sin against what they dread. There can be no doubt whatsoever that in Europe in the middle ages and in Ireland to-day, and indeed wherever an illiterate people are to be found and the priests are more highly educated than the mass of their flock, that so-called religion is really a binding and restraining power, it is a protection to society and really prevents a great many outrages which would otherwise be perpetrated. It does not take very long for any intelligent person to see that there can be no TRUE religion where there is only fear, for true religion, pure and undefiled, is entirely disconnected from the idea of fear. The many temples which have been erected all over the world as man's offering to God for the purpose of propitiating the Most High, the sacrifices which have been offered by all nations to appease the divine anger, the continual *fear* of God before the eyes of man! that constant "fear of the Lord," which was said by Solomon to be the "beginning of wisdom," can never be the fair fruit-

age, can never be the end and crown of man's wisdom in religion. It is true that the love of God is the beginning of wisdom, the highest and the purest wisdom, but it is also true that before we have attained to the love of God many persons need to be shown the consequences of evil; thus, the stern and harsh element which has not been absent in any of the religions of the old world, but which is now happily dying out, may be regarded as a prelude to an anthem, a mere introduction to some grand oratorio in which instruments and voices will unite in the praise of God as it has never been rendered on earth before.

The idea of the orthodox world to-day appears to a very large extent to be this,— that religion is a mechanical something which in some magical way resides in churches, sunday schools, sermons, hymns and prayers, its magical value consisting in this, that it will constrain man to allow God to take the old heart out of him, which is corrupt, and put a new heart in him, which is clean and pure.

The form and ceremony of religion, as well as its sacrificial element, inevitably associated with a feeling of dread, is gradually passing away. Everywhere the fear of God is growing less than formerly, men experience less dread of a life beyond the grave, men have less superstitious veneration for what are ordinarily termed idols than formerly; still the tendency of modern practice is unquestionably in so-called religious circles to spend very large amounts of money in building edifices and consecrating them to the service of religion, setting them apart for what are called sacred uses, exempting them from taxation on the ground that they are holy places and therefore public benefactions, but often allowing them to become mere fashionable clubs, where people buy pews at auction and hire sittings as they do at theatres.

What is the church of to-day? Whatever any one may say in favor of Protestant Christianity in this coun-

try, it must be concluded that the Roman Catholic churches in some respects come nearer to the highest idea of a church, because many of these churches are continually open, the public go into them at will, they are built by the offerings of a large number of people, many of the very poorest people giving their ten cents, their five cents, and even their one cent towards their erection and maintenance. Churches which are continually open and belong to the people are really built by the people, and are of the people and for the people. So far so good; where the evil creeps in is in the creed and practice of the Roman Church, which undertakes to employ these buildings for the inculcation of ideas at variance with true human liberty.

Take the cathedrals and other large churches in Europe, as works of art, as asylums of refuge for the poor, and for tired people wandering up and down the streets they are perfect God-sends. Let the poor flower-girl, the match-seller, or the man or woman who is carrying a heavy burden, step into one of those churches for a few moments' rest and thought, and he goes away not only with the belief that God's house is a house of prayer, he knows it; the church to him is really a house of God and a gate of heaven; to the poor and weary it is an oasis in the desert of the city. In this connection we would mention that if St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Tremont Street in this city and other open churches are utilized as they can be, when they stand open all day long, a great deal more good may really be done by the churches when there is no service being performed than when the services are going on; the very fact that people can go in somewhere and rest awhile, the simple, kindly invitation to sit down and contemplate spiritual things and meditate at their own sweet will without being disturbed is one that should be far more generally given and far more widely accepted than it usually is.

If a church is always kept open and devoted to the

people, so that any one can go in and enjoy silence, calm, rest and meditation without a ritual, without hearing music and without any sermon, or if the organ should be played sometimes softly, and occasionally sweet singing, introduced with or without words, through music, the tired spirit can receive divine refreshment. Sweet strains of music are always helpful, and when the organ is played unaccompanied by any voices, the heart of the listener can often supply the words most suited to his need.

Religion pure and simple is an unfoldment of the spiritual nature, and if a house of God and gate of heaven is to be made with hands, if such a temple can be built with stone, or any other mortal substance, then it must be a place into which the people can go whenever they will, to pour out their hearts to the great unseen, and to drink in the influence of that divine power which is all around every one of us. Churches or temples which are of real benefit to mankind must offer an open and ever-present welcome to those who live in crowded tenements and hardly ever have an opportunity of resting their eyes upon the beautiful. Now if churches are to be built, and spiritual temples are to be erected which are to be something more than fashionable clubs, if such buildings are to be positively beneficial, they must be in the fullest sense of the term democratic institutions; they must be open to everybody and at all times. The only restriction that should be placed upon their use should be that care is taken that no outrages are committed, and that they are not perverted to evil ends. The people should only be required to behave quietly and properly. If all the churches should stand open continually, inviting the poor, the homeless and the crowded, then they would, to the extent that they were utilized, help people to realize more and more of spiritual realities and assist them to draw nearer and nearer to God.

We do not care whom we please or whom we offend; we speak the truth as we feel it and see it; and while we

admit that under the laws of the state you have a perfect right to collect subscriptions at your will to go towards building an edifice that you may attend just when you wish and reserve for any exclusive purposes you please, and while there is nothing immoral in doing so, such an edifice is not in truth a spiritual temple. You have a right to build yourself a handsome house, you certainly have a right to give receptions when you please, and invite to them whom you choose, or to give concerts and entertainments, and sell the seats to whom you like ; but when we are talking of philanthropic effort, of real humanitarian work, we are not speaking only of something that people have a right to or that they cannot be prevented from doing. When we speak of erecting a temple of God, a house of God and gate of heaven on a material plane, what we mean is that the builders do something that shall not only possess the negative value of not being wrong, but emphatically the advantage of being very decidedly right ; if anything is to be said concerning religious institutions which exist in reality for the benefit of the world, we must confine our observations to such as are positively useful. If religion is simply to be classed among the permissables of life, if a spiritual temple is to be only something that we have no right to interfere with and no reason to object to, such simple negative good will not answer the demands of the age, for it is giving them a stone when the people are asking for bread, offering only an outward form when the people are needing spiritual light and comfort. When any one says to us, how shall we dedicate a building to the Almighty? we reply, consecrate it to humanity for the world's good, and by consecrating it to mankind for the world's improvement you give it to God in the only sense in which God cares to own it. God is infinitely rich and cannot need anything we have. God does not require any offering at our hands, but the true worship of God is a service ren-

dered to any one of his children who can be helped by the service rendered by another.

One of the most salient points that naturally come before us for our consideration is this : how did the idea get into the world—and it has expressed itself in all times and in all countries—that God is nearer to the earth in some places than in others. It has always been declared by mankind that God is nearer to some parts of the earth than to others, but why ? Does not the Eternal One inhabit infinitude ? does not He pervade all space ? Can we suppose He is any more in this room than in any other room, that he is any less in the whole forest than under the shade of any special tree, that he is any more on the mountain than in the valley, or any more amid the most beautiful scenery than in the arid desert ? In one sense God never comes any nearer than he always is to man, but man draws nearer to the infinite in thought and feeling through the agency of special circumstances. Man gets nearer to God under certain conditions, while God's nearness to his children is unvarying.

So when we sing "Nearer, my God, to Thee," we do not mean that God is not here but away off up in heaven, we do not petition God to come down to us ; God is here, everywhere. His life is the life of the universe : in God we live, move and have our being, but we must come into a realizing sense of God's presence, or we know nothing about it. The stars come no nearer to man because of the telescope, but while the facts of the universe, such as the position of the heavenly bodies, cannot be altered by astronomical instruments, we may come into a relation with them and into a knowledge which otherwise is impossible to us. Now, just as there are certain places on earth which are more favorable for astronomical observations than other places from which we can observe most readily the distances of the planets from the earth, the planets are no nearer to those points of the

earth than to other districts ; yet there is a sense in which they appear to be so, because certain positions enable us to make discoveries that in other places we cannot make.

If we enter into a sanctuary with a direct purpose in our minds of getting nearer to the spiritual universe, if we go there for the sake of getting a revelation, then we assure you it is not because there is any disposition on the part of the Eternal to favor certain localities : the mental condition of man has everything to do with it. Whatever calls your attention to spiritual things, whatever influences you so as to allow you to hear the voices of angels, whatever, in a word, takes you nearer and nearer to the Eternal Light by directing your thought and feeling away from transitory things, enables you to feel surely, as Jacob did of old, " God is in this place and I knew it not." God was always near to Jacob, but Jacob knew it at one time and did not know it at another. The true inference from his experience is not that God was not always with him, but Jacob did not always know that God was with him. Jacob made a discovery that God was in a certain place, but the discovery which he made was the result of an altered condition of his own mind. When he saw the ladder with the angels ascending and descending he only saw in a vision a symbol of spiritual activities which are never relinquished. The ladder appeared to him to be localized in a certain spot, and that there were angels just there. The truth is, there were certain conditions there which enabled him to see the angels and feel their presence. They were no more there than anywhere else, but they appeared more really there to him than elsewhere because his state of mind changed. When he reached a certain stage in his journey he was open to the reception of spiritual truth he had not dreamed of before.

A great many people ask us, why do you pray? You say that God is everywhere, you declare that God rules the universe by immutable laws ; if that be so, how can

we draw God any nearer to us by prayer if God is already in us and we are in God? Certainly, we cannot. The very thought that we could would be absurd; for to acknowledge the existence of an infinitely good and wise Being, and then to assume that God could be turned out of his course by a poor, finite man, would be to suggest that God would change for the worse, because an infinite God could not change for the better. But if, on the other hand, we affirm that while God does not change, we do, and that though His law is immutable we are mutable, and that while the great eternal truth of being is always the same, we ourselves change continually, then our prayer is not a prayer for God to alter, but a prayer for our own growth and development, not a prayer for change in the immutable course of the universe, but a prayer for the improvement and development of ourselves, not a prayer that things in their eternal order should change in their course, but a prayer that our relation to our surroundings should change for the better, that new light should break in, new glory be revealed to us. When we view all true prayer and all heartfelt praise in this light, everything wears a new aspect and smiles upon us with a radiant, new complexion. No longer do we pray to God that we may alter his decree. No longer do we sing to Him that our praises may flatter the Eternal and dispose Him to do us good. No longer do we court angels and fall like sycophants before their thrones, hoping that they may bestow favors upon us; we take a far more exalted view than this of all the hosts of heaven, and place them infinitely above alteration through any of our feeble attempts. We do not for an instant suppose that they are displeased with us when we do not offer them some gifts, and that they are pleased with us when we do.

A true utterance of prayer or praise consists of words that suggest to our own minds and to the minds of others divine ideas; truly spiritual exercises lift us into a region of devout meditation and holy contemplation, therefore

the very words of praise, the very words of prayer, may be powerful for good ; and just as the cursing and swearing that we hear in the streets and the profane oaths that constantly leave the mouths of children as well as grown people cannot hurt God, cannot harm the pure angels, but can and do suggest ideas of impurity to the minds of all sensitive listeners, hurting the bystanders at the time they are uttered, so all our religious exercises, whatever they may be, are valuable from our liberal point of view as having a direct reference to individual man's relation to human society, while the relation of the Eternal to man can never be changed.

Now in the light of this conclusion we naturally inquire how shall we build a temple of God? What is the plain and positive duty of those who are really interested in the moral welfare of mankind? What is to be done? We must not content ourselves with dreaming, we must work. We must not be willing to let things go on in the so-called even tenor of the world. We must do something. We must exert an influence in the community, positive and active, and aggressive against evil, and at all times. The question is before the public as to the further introduction of moral training into the schools. The only answer which any liberal thinker can give to the propositions which are made to put God into the American Constitution is that the only way in which we can put God into the Constitution in reality is by putting good into the hearts of the people, by bringing up the children in ways of virtue, in paths of godliness and peace. All along, the words "In God we trust" have been on the American coinage; all along, sessions of Congress have been opened with prayer; all along, a chapter from the Bible has been read in the public schools, but we have not seen that "In God we trust" on the American money has made the people trust less in fraud in making money or less in vanity when they have spent that money; we have not found out yet that the

opening of Congress with a prayer has given the Congressmen any more wisdom or consideration for the real welfare of their fellow-men when they have been intent upon pursuing their own personal ends, and we have not found that the mere reading of a chapter from the Bible in the common schools, or that the prayers in colleges, have really had the effect of regenerating the children and the young men. No virtue resides in form, in and of itself. A mere incantation is of no avail. There is altogether too much Kabalism in the world; too much sorcery and witchcraft. There is no virtue whatever in the outward observance of religion. That is not what the world needs, but what the world does need, and the one thing that will save the world, is for individuals that take prominent and public positions to inspire those with whom they come in contact with a deeper love of virtue through virtue exuding from their own minds. The only way to put God into the Constitution is to put good men into Congress and into the Senate. Let us elect a good man as President and a good man as Vice-President and fill all the offices with honorable and well-disposed people. Such a course will put God into the Constitution, not in word, but in reality, and while the word "God," and certainly while the phrase "Our Lord Jesus Christ," has no business whatever in the American Constitution, yet goodness of heart and purity of morals has; if a land is to become a temple of the living God it will become such only when vice in every form is dethroned, only when pride and prejudice are unseated, when connivance and trickery are driven out of the government. When we have forced the devil out, God will be willing to come in. But as long as we persist in having the devil, as long as we worship Mammon, the *name* of God will be no talismanic charm saving us from evil influences.

The whole point with regard to moral and religious education is the duty of setting our own houses in order, plucking the beams out of our own eyes, putting

own pride, craftiness and hypocrisy aside, not only giving a good example, but exerting a good moral influence; and until we can do this, until we can put a divine element in our fellow-beings, until we assist them to a life of virtue, until we can bring before the front the good in all by the all-persuasive action of our spiritual natures, until we can become the means of unfolding and educating the spiritual element in our fellow-beings, we shall never have arrived to a understanding of what is meant by a temple of God, the use of God, or a gate of heaven. Now, of course, so far as the external side of the question is concerned, when it relates to the erection and support of places of worship, we can only believe that they do good in a similar way to that in which the schools do good. Why do you open schools? Because you all acknowledge that there is intelligence within every child, or at least you try to acknowledge that there is intelligence within every child, and that such intelligence can be brought under certain conditions which are more favorable than others to mental development. Now any so-called spiritual temple or church ought to be a place where spiritual influences work upon character and cause the souls of the congregation to grow into harmony with other planes of being. When we get a multitude together in one accord in any house we feel an infection of soul, a contagion of moral influence, one helps another. When you enter a company of well-disposed people you will instinctively feel that there is something in their atmosphere which leads your thoughts as though involuntarily into humane and useful channels. Now there are many objects for building temples and supporting them. There are drinking saloons all over the city brilliantly lighted, inviting every one to come in, the passer-by entering in, hearing the mirthful jokes and singing, seeing the gas jets flaming, feels assured of warmth and welcome and a lively company should he enter the open door; we

all know how pernicious is the influence of these attractive dens of crime. Must there not, in order to close up these houses of the devil and gates of hell, be an opening of houses of God and gates of heaven? We do not care whether you call an edifice a temple, a school or a theatre. It does not matter what you call it; it matters only what its moral influence is; for as Shakespeare says "a rose would smell as sweet by any other name," so a church would do just as much good if it were called a theatre, and a theatre could do just as much harm if it were called a church; if improperly conducted the name could not save it. The only important question concerns the object in mind for which a building is erected; the real question is, why do people frequent an edifice? for what object are the sermons or orations delivered, or the plays acted? Here in this city we have no doubt there are many places where angels verily trouble the waters, and people stepping into them are healed of many infirmities; but we need more "beautiful gates" and "living temples" where multitudes of poor sin-sick and physically ailing persons can be relieved. When imbued with pure and sincere desires to help and to reform, but not to punish, we can turn a prison into a sanctuary of delight, we can by the concentrated influence of our minds so unite ourselves and others with celestial angels that the divine forces which are ever working for man's redemption cause us to become rivers of healing mercy. There is no reason why we should not build temples of stone to the living God; but the true temples of the living God must be first of all our own bodies, then they may afterwards and in a lesser sense be the brick and mortar edifices in which we dwell and wherein we congregate. We believe very much in the power of silent spiritual influence, in addition to precept and example; we believe very much in the spiritual donation of gospeling which is of priceless value to the spirit and which can be contributed by those who have no gold and silver to give as well as by those

who have ; we believe entirely in the efficacy of Peter's claim, " Silver and gold have I none, but what I have give I thee, arise, take up thy bed and walk," but we do not believe that Peter or any one else could say in his heart silver and gold I have, but I want to keep it, I will not give you any, but as it costs nothing in a wordly sense I will try to exert some spiritual power to help you ; we say we do not believe such a person would do any good, because in such a frame of mind you would not be doing your utmost ; if you have silver and gold you must give it to help on good works, but if you have it not, and give what you have independent of it, you give all you can. Many people say constantly, I have no money and therefore cannot support a meeting. Of course you can support the meeting without money. If you have no money, give what you have. You have sympathetic force of soul, give that. Give anything and everything you can. A person who has no silver and gold often gives what is infinitely more valuable ; the one who gives fervent prayer is putting the greatest offering of all into the treasury of the Lord. But there is unfortunately a state of mind in which people excuse themselves from giving material things because they do not want to part with them, and then fall back upon the value of spiritual influences when they have not got any of any value. The very fact that they are not willing to give what they can, is an evidence that there is very little spiritual fervor in them. A person must be willing to do his utmost whatever it is, and only if he does his utmost in whatever field of work he may be laboring, only if he does his **VERY BEST**, having done all that he could, will he reap a rich reward. The reward to which many look forward in the future life will not be a crown bedecked with jewels upon your brow ; it will not be any outward possession, it will be a sense of happiness within your own bosom springing solely from the consciousness of having helped others. Those whom you have blest will show you the beautiful

and glorious home prepared for you; they will remind you of what they once were; one of them may say, "I once lived in the very midst of degradation and despair, yours was the only voice that ever said a kindly word to me, yours was the only hand ever outstretched to me to save me from the yawning abyss of crime in which I was about to plunge." Then there will arise from out the inmost depths of your memory the thought of a time when you met some poor fellow-creature in deep distress; perhaps you could give him nothing outward even though he was starving for food and shelter; you had none to give, but you prayed earnestly to God to help him, you addressed kind words to him, you poured out your soul for him, and from that moment, though you did not know it, he was reformed and healed, he owed his elevation to the moment when he came in contact with your mind; there is a sample of work we can all perform. We can all be living temples, we can all be living, moving tabernacles in which divine love has taken up its blessed abode; we can all be houses of God on feet, walking through the highways and byways of the world; we can all reflect the divine presence, showing forth its light and glory so that wherever we tread smiles will spring forth at our approach, to vanquish tears, joy will chase away sorrow, health will quench disease. We may claim nothing for ourselves, and the world may think that we do nothing, while we ourselves may sometimes feel afraid that we are not doing anything of consequence because we have no outward means of knowing of the fruits of our spiritual industry; but if we have allowed the eternal good to shine through us and to use us as instruments, we have become God's living temples. If you wish to build a temple of God there is always some poor forlorn child or some one whom the world has led astray, some one at whom society shoots its bitterest arrows; there is always some work to be done in connection with the reformation and education of poor outcast children; all persons who devote themselves to rearing God's children in paths of

virtue and integrity are living temples of Deity. Though by so doing we may be performing a quality of work that the world does not mention, we have been building temples that remain throughout eternity. No storm, earthquake, or eruption of a volcano can ever destroy such temples. You may put a million of dollars into a granite block and your name may be heralded forth as the builder of a most splendid edifice, but any day a storm may come and sweep it all away. But if you have worked for the living temple, whether you have worked in a temple of brick and stone or not (and you can only work for the living temple by doing good to your fellow-beings, especially those of your fellow-beings whom others pass by), if you have invited in the halt, the lame and blind, those who could not repay you, if you have summoned them to your feast, if your banquet has been spread for those whom the world has never invited to its dainties, then those living temples which you have beautified will all be so many crowns for your spirit shining with glory surpassing that of the sun in his meridian strength; for in eternity you will bask in the light of the greatest glory that heaven can reflect upon you if through your exertions others have been helped to adorn the temples of their being with greater loveliness and truth. Let us seek the highest pathway, pursue the greatest good; and while not neglecting outward means of grace, ever remember that he who works in the spirit and for the spirit is infinitely more blessed than he who so confounds the spiritual with the temporal that only what time can win is the outcome of his toil. The temple of God is humanity; to build it truly is to unfold the human spirit.

INCOMING TIDES.

THE tides flow out, the tides flow in,
 Love's tide destroys all hate and sin;
 The tide of wisdom sweeps away
 The doubts that harass us to-day;

New light is breaking from o'er there,
 Where angels ever bright and fair,
 Clothed in bright robes of shimmering white,
 Reflect pure rays of heavenly light.

The tides have times for ebb and flow,
 As cycles dawn and ages go;
 Ye may not count the sacred years,
 Or know how to th' eternal spheres
 Earth is related evermore;
 But lo! from yonder dazzling shore
 New light to earth this hour is given,
 And myriad minds are loosed from prison.

Let the free tide of coming day
 Sweep all the dross of wrong away;
 For when the present flowing wave
 Earth's shores awhile no more will lave,
 Pearls from the ocean of God's truth
 To grace the world's fresh crown of youth
 Will, thickly scattered on time's shore,
 More bliss bespeak than e'er of yore
 The world has known. Each coming tide
 Doth hidden gems of spirit hide.

SPIRITUAL VALENTINES.

How to Send and How to Receive Them.

THE subject of Valentines may not at first sight appear a very religious or spiritual one, but on closer inspection of our theme, we shall doubtless find it suggestive of many important and practical ideas having a direct bearing on our daily intercourse with our fellow-beings, though not perhaps so closely associated with outward speech and conduct as with that far subtler and more interior realm of being, the realm of mental action. It has been customary for a long time past to send and receive valentines on the fourteenth day of February, every year. The custom is of course associated in the Roman Calendar with the youthful saint to whom this day is dedicated, and like many another custom connected with bygone centuries, its origin and original intent are somewhat obscure; but while the precise origin of valentines may not be known so fully as to justify a very positive statement concerning them, while the custom doubtless extends back to ancient nations and perhaps to countries now almost buried in oblivion, the nature and import of valentines themselves are sufficiently apparent to justify all in assenting to the conclusion that they have always been intended to convey the sender's feelings and wishes to the recipient in a portable and durable form. A valentine, if sent in sincerity as a token of fervent love or earnest friendship, cannot fail to carry with it a blessed influence, cheering and inspiring to the one to whom it is sent. It

may be a Cupid's dart charmingly ensheathed mid floral emblems and dainty verse, or it may be a simple good wish, a God speed or God bless you, but if sent by loving hands, if purchased and posted with kindly intention, it can never be merely a pretty piece of decorated paper or a fashionable souvenir of a day which it is customary to commemorate.

At this time, when the topic of mental and magnetic influences is so prominently before the public and arresting so much attention almost everywhere, we cannot be wasting an hour if we devote it to a consideration of what is now popularly termed "telepathy," which is simply the conveyance of thought from one mind to another by divers methods. The more you look into this question of mental action, the more mystifying and complicated it becomes until you have found the rule by which the whole problem is solved, then the process of solution in every instance is as easy as the solving of a mathematical problem to a trained mathematician; still, no matter how eminent a professor of mathematics may be, problems are never solved without diligent application of the rule, and such application becomes easier and easier to one who is constantly employing it; difficult problems are never solved without some mental effort, they have to be worked out in every instance. It is surely undeniable among all who have investigated the matter patiently, wishful to obtain knowledge, that mind does act upon mind in a great variety of ways, not only by direct voluntary and determined action of will, but often by suggestion, by what may be termed mental exhalation, and this often apparently unconsciously.

To employ a physical illustration to demonstrate the spiritual side of the question, a book or a picture is not supposed to be in any sense a conscious agent, still the influence of inanimate books and pictures is enormous either for weal or woe on many sections of the community. The old dime novel was never in and of itself

anything more than a batch of common paper; paper has no power to argue and persuade, how can paper lead youth astray? Printer's ink is wholly inanimate and therefore harmless from the point of view of morals, but mind can impress paper with its own reflection, mind can go into the compositor's room and set up type, mind can compel ink to portray suggestions to other minds which have emanated from itself; thus the inanimate things which have no life or consciousness in themselves and know not what they are doing are not saved from becoming instruments of evil or prevented from transmitting thoughts of virtue because of their own innocence of all intent.

Pictures cannot speak, but they embody ideas which if allowed to take possession of the minds who gaze upon them will cause the affected ones to change their manner of life in proportion to the extent that they are guided by them. If you follow out this line of reasoning, you will clearly see how in universal human experience inanimate things, unconscious agents, are made to act as medium between mind and mind, thereby arousing reformers in all fields of action to rigorously resist the encroaches of the mere appearance of evil, while at the same time they see the great necessity of encouraging even the appearance of good.

One of the most interesting studies of the day is, psychic influence; but unfortunately for profitable psychical research, there are but few minds so trained as to be really able to conduct it to anything like a successful issue. Psychical research committees often waste time, strength, and money in proving nothing, because while experts in some special fields of enquiry, they are practically ignoramuses in that particular department of research where they are foolishly requested to take lead as specialists. It requires a mind psychologically educated or with a natural psychological bent to intelligently investigate psychology, as much as it requires a natural

taste for music, and a good voice, to make a really successful singer. Some there are, who from childhood have had remarkable spiritual experiences and have therefore come naturally into a frame of mind which enables them to deal with spiritual problems; but the ordinary, unreflecting, materialistic mind of the present day has no aptitude for psychical research: this age is too busy, noisy, and hurried to encourage introspection and that nice attention which must be paid to the psychic side of nature so necessary to constitute one an authority on the subject. In the East it is different; there the very atmosphere tends itself to contemplation; for this reason many persons claim that the climate of Asia is peculiarly favorable for spiritual perception; it is not necessarily so from any physical cause, but rather on account of the temperament and tendencies of the natives.

Climate may invite to repose or restless activity, but climate itself becomes gradually modified by the action of man over the elements; it is mind over matter which plants trees in some places and uproots them in others, for are they not planted and uprooted by the hand of man in obedience to his will? There are no limits to the supremacy of mind; where we do not trace mind it is working beyond our ken; whenever we can trace effects to their originating causes, we find every cause a mental one.

It may be argued, and often is, that many things occur in obedience to some natural law or force in nature which is wholly disconnected from mind and works blindly or in obedience to an undefined principle vaguely called necessity, but this vague surmising proves absolutely nothing, as law is itself a manifestation of mind; no logician can dispute Plato, who testified to the geometrical workings of Deity in nature. Mind geometrizes, and the universe everywhere testifies to an all-pervading geometrizing mind. Mind is the primal fount of all things; where we cannot trace effects to their primal causes, our

ignorance is alone to blame. God rules and nature is servant. No personification of God can be satisfactory to the mind of an astute reasoner, because the idea of personality is always associated in current thought with arbitrary limitations and the source of all must be unlimited; not only do we often fail to trace the universe to the Infinite Cause, the Eternal Mind, but we fail constantly in our endeavor to trace the commonest effects to the sources whence they spring. There is in nature what may be termed a ministry of second causes, and these may often appear to be material, but these secondary causes are only effects of an undiscovered primal cause, as a very little careful reasoning will at any time completely prove.

The old question of the ages, on what does the world rest, is being asked over and over again to-day; if the world rests on an egg and the egg on a tortoise, on what does the tortoise rest? or, to put it the other way, if the tortoise rests on the egg, on what does the egg rest? A restatement of the case offers no solution of the mystery, the difficulty remains the same; shallow reasoners cannot get beyond what they term material causes, profounder thinkers maintain there are no material causes, for all matter is effect; the cause lies behind the veil and is always mental.

What is there in an innocent piece of writing paper to curdle the blood and blanch the cheek? why on receipt of a letter or telegram will people fall down in fits and lose their senses? why have slips of paper, on which a few words are written, been known to cause physical dissolution? You cannot account for it on the animal magnetic theory, for a telegraphic despatch is not brought in contact with the hand of the sender of the message, the words written on the paper are only capable of producing an effect upon your body to the extent that they are believed to be true, when they become suddenly invested with magical power; the words then at once possess a

cabalistic value, they partake of the nature of incantations; but if they be ever so true and you believe them not, they have no power over you either to harm or bless.

It is easy to perceive why so much stress has already been laid on faith, but we only see half the truth on this subject when we simply look at faith and do not look behind it to its producing cause. Faith is both a cause and an effect; tidings influence us to the extent we can control them and no further, but we cannot always control ourselves so as to believe or disbelieve as we may please. There are wheels within wheels, causes behind causes, until we find the ultimate cause we have not encountered the real object of our search. Faith is not always founded upon truth, belief in error influences many times judiciously, persons have been hurried out of mortal existence through a shock occasioned by utterly false tidings but when this has been the case all the mischief has been caused by a lack of power or disposition on one side or the other to understand and obey truth. If, for instance, a person is very highly intuitive and so far developed spiritually that he invariably receives correct impressions he can never be deceived; he is then one of the "elect" whom it is impossible to deceive either by means or mistake; if one is not sufficiently endowed with the gift of spiritual discernment, successful imposture can plunge him into seemingly unmerited ruin and disgrace but here the finger of God may be traced educating the human spirit. We are all liable to deception up to a certain point but no further, no shaft of malice, no falsehood intentional or unintentional, can cause us any pain or inconvenience if our spiritual eyes are wide open enough to detect falsehood and always separate chaff from wheat or truth from error. We can safely affirm man's liability to deception when he has outgrown those lower states of mind in which he is liable to be misled; innocence coupled with ignorance can never be a saviour, but

innocence and knowledge go hand in hand, the serpent's wisdom and the dove's harmlessness form together the whole armor of righteousness which renders its wearer utterly proof against every form of evil both open and insidious.

In the realm of abstract truth, whatever is, is doubtless right. Pope stated an abstract truth when he uttered those remarkable words, "whatever is, is right," but in our daily walks of life we have to shape our conduct in obedience to laws of relative right; no speculative philosophy relating to eternity and infinitude can supply the needed rule for daily action; truth must be adapted to the state of society to which it appeals, it never needs to be adulterated or in the slightest degree mixed with error; truths are never opposed to each other; a true philosophy of life can never lead to erroneous conduct when rightly understood; at the same time vague abstractions are often resorted to as excuses for shirking duty, as in the case of people whom we have met who refused to supply bread to the hungry on the ground that the hungry might need the discipline of hunger or they would not be hungry; to which sophistry we applied the retort that as the time would surely come when the hungry person would need the experience of having something to eat, and as circumstances had thrown the hungry and the well-fed together, the one in affluent circumstances undoubtedly needed the discipline of sharing his abundance with a brother who was in need.

We may condone any offence, on the ground that we cannot harm any one who is superior to the influence of malice; this may be true abstractly, but it is never true that we can harm another even though that harm be overruled for that other's good without causing the mental poison we exude to return upon us, and sooner or later occasion us the very suffering we have wilfully endeavored to bring upon another.

The human spirit is here on earth to meet with error

and overcome it ; every experience of life, no matter how dark and enigmatical it may be, is overruled for good ; no wave of opposition which beats against you, no trial, temptation, sorrow or unkindness, but will eventually prove itself a blessing in disguise ; we need not trouble ourselves at all about what other people may seek to do against us if we maintain our own integrity and thereby through effort become proof against evil, but our duty is clearly marked out for us by our intuitive perception of right, by every gracious and benevolent impulse of our being. We have all in some degree the witness of the spirit within us and that witness never varies, it is human conscience (con-science, what all men know together) ; this divine breath, this immortal voice of God in man, is the same in every age and clime, and to yield to this without reserve is to tread in that safe though straight and narrow way which alone can lead to everlasting life, for no life is everlasting except the life of God and its perfect reflection in the soul.

The power to set a good example has been defined by some as the one talent which every soul possesses ; no matter whether high or low, rich or poor, all can set a good example ; the patient sufferer uncomplaining on his couch of pain through weary days and sleepless nights can set an example of purest, holiest fortitude, the richest man in the community can employ his wealth and all the influence that is attached to wealth in such a way as to secure the comfort and prosperity of thousands, while the poorest in the world can in their lowly sphere so prove the existence of true happiness apart from worldly store that others situated like themselves will rise to joy who are now crushed down with woe and disappointment through lack of fleeting treasure. But while it is almost impossible to overestimate the amount and extent of good one may accomplish by example, example flows from mind ; our mental states are responsible for our words and acts, and what is more, our minds are con-

stantly emitting an effluvia with which we charge the air we breathe although it be unconsciously.

Let us for a moment consider this great question of mental influence from the simplest and most eminently rational and practical point of view. Can we long restrain ourselves from actions we are longing to commit? If our minds are constantly dwelling on forbidden subjects, if we dwell on murder, theft, adultery, or any form of wrong, if we fondle evil thoughts, hide them in our bosoms, enjoy dwelling upon them in secret, though the conventional code of society, and oftentimes our fear of exposure and punishment, may constrain us to abstain from letting these thoughts take form in word and action, does it not daily become harder and harder for us to live in opposition to our deepest desires? Even if we do succeed in keeping our evil motives to ourselves and never ventilating them in word and deed, they cause us to poison the very atmosphere and instil into the minds of others that evil virus which often in most unsuspected ways innoculates with dire disease all who are unhappy enough to come within the circle of our influence, save only those happy few who by reason of their uncommon spirituality are proof against these dark and secret sources of destruction.

Thought is a substance, ideas are entities, the fact that mortal vision cannot behold mental influence is no proof of its nonexistence; in the realm of physics it is everywhere admitted that strength lies in the invisible far more than in the visible; even the bacteria, of which you all heard so much at the time of the cholera scare, could never have been seen without a microscope.

Those peculiarly sensitive people who are usually called clairvoyants and psychometrists are mental microscopists; they take cognizance of what is veiled from other minds; such persons always declare that they can feel mental and mortal atmospheres, learn in subtle ways the disposition and habits of people with whom they

come in contact or whose dwellings they enter, through what some of the French Academicians have called a sixth sense. This sixth sense, erroneously so called, is the one all-inclusive sense of mind, the five bodily senses being only five gates, as Bunyan calls them in his "Holy War," through which this single sense of spirit makes itself manifest by measure to mortal understanding.

There are many who are always grieving because they cannot do what they wish they could for others; they cannot make presents to their friends because they lack the money; still their hearts go out in loving kindness to their loved ones, especially at those festive seasons when it is the pleasing custom of the world to show material evidence of kindness of heart. Nothing can be more delightful than the task of working and buying gifts for those you love, but if you cannot make an outward offering do not think your loved ones need go presentless; you can say with Peter of old, "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give thee," and that which you have when you have no gold or silver is the whole wealth of your affection; this will comfort, heal and save when all material offerings may be naught but baubles carrying with them nothing of the spirit's fragrance and therefore spiritually useless however great may be their earthly value. Of course this view of real beneficence does not in any way detract from the sage counsel of James urging us to show our faith and goodness of heart by our deeds of charity; whenever opportunity offers it is simply impossible for a soul deeply touched with true charity and commiseration to stay the hand and give nothing outward to relieve distress of body as well as of mind; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and out of the same abundance the hand bestoweth and that liberally.

It seems to us inconceivable that abstract spiritual truths can ever be brought forth by sincere and earnest persons to justify negligence in conduct. No doubt

there are many hypocrites in these days as there were in the time of Jesus who make a pretense of charity, but have none in their hearts; in the hands and mouths of such, charity in its deepest and truest form is so perverted by sophistry that in their case the very devil wears a robe of light to make himself look like an angel.

Always be very chary of accepting an interpretation of spiritual truth that has a tendency to argue away duties and obligations; that interpretation of truth which is always soundest, clearest and nearest to the absolutely right is one which accompanies and offers an incentive to every possible righteous and charitable activity; but truth is ever a two-edged sword, one blade is always in the opposite direction to the other; we have to walk round it and look at it from both sides before we can see just where and what the blades of this almighty sword really are. One blade cuts into secret thought and feeling, and tells us we must be careful of our inmost thoughts and keep the heart (seat of affection and motive) pure, for out of it are the issues of life invariably brought forth. This view of truth lays all stress on motive; it does not exaggerate the importance of a pure heart, but it treats of the heart and of the heart only, and in so doing it lays the axe to the root of the tree, and accomplishes thereby the only genuine and spiritual reformation possible. The other blade of truth's divine sword cuts into conduct, it deals with effects and teaches us to judge the tree by the fruit it bears; things are not right because they are expedient, they are not first expedient, and then right afterwards; rectitude can never flow from expediency, but things are expedient because they are right. No wrong can be expedient except very briefly, and then only in appearance, a mental error based on sensuous calculations only making it appear so.

There is, there must be, an Eternal Right, an absolute truth which never varies, and never can; but those who do not know what is in man, who cannot read secret de-

sires and hidden motions through lack of adequate spiritual discernment must apply the rule given by Jesus to his followers who had not yet attained to the spiritual altitude he himself had reached. Every good tree, he said, brings forth good fruit, and every corrupt tree evil fruit. It is impossible for it to be otherwise, therefore, by their fruits ye shall know them. Grapes cannot spring from thorns, nor figs from thistles. We see this amply illustrated in the history of the ancient and modern world, and in the case of every individual if we only wait until the tares and wheat have grown together long enough to prove their difference. Good words and deeds are the children of good thoughts. Good desires insist upon translating themselves into generous deeds whenever opportunity offers; but when no outward means are procurable, and the spirit is confined to its own hidden resources altogether, those resources used prayerfully and faithfully are so potent that material events continually shape themselves in most surprising ways, obedient to a mental force propelled by some obscure and unknown benefactor of the people, who perhaps with only a crust of bread and cup of water in some poor attic prays with all his heart and soul, forgetful of self for those whom he fain would relieve outwardly, if it were only in his power.

Whenever the judgment hour arrives, no matter what the judgment may be (it may be that you will be called upon to render your account in presence of assembled multitudes, or it may be that silently and alone the judge within may pronounce your righteous sentence and bid you to ascend to spheres of joy, or mourn in darkness because of wasted opportunities and buried talents), if the voice of the judge pronounces in your inward ear you have done what you could, then that single assurance will fill your soul with bliss divine and make all spheres a heaven to you; or if on the other hand the judge decides you have not done what you could, then

conscience taking up the strain, and echoing the words along the corridors of the immortal state, will fill you with remorse and shame, no matter how loudly men may have applauded or how lovingly the world or church may have caressed you.

We can never hear or read the touching story of Jesus and the woman who anointed his feet with ointment at the ruler's feast without taking in a fresh draught of inspiration as we breathe the fragrance, not of the woman's ointment, but of the deep spiritual justice and charity which Jesus displayed on the occasion. Of course a shallow mind, which cannot distinguish coarse vulgarity and driving superficiality from a radical treatment of any subject, may say easily enough that Jesus was flattered with the woman's attention and lauded her to the skies for showing him a personal honor. A vain, foolish reader, or a crabbed, narrow iconoclast utterly destitute of all spiritual perception, can probably take no higher view of any spiritual question; such an one should be pitied for his own poverty of thought and absence of insight, and left to declaim until he is tired of hearing his own chatter against a subject beyond his depth; but leaving all such unworthy comments and turning our eyes intelligently on the story, can we fail to see the nice distinction drawn by Jesus, or the writer of the story, whoever he may have been, between an act considered by itself and an act viewed as an expression of the motive from which it sprung? The woman had been a sinner, and a loving teacher had saved her from herself by urging her, and that successfully, to abandon her previous evil mode of life, and commence afresh as an honorable member of society. This teacher is neither a priest nor an autocrat, he is no acknowledged dignitary, but simply an itinerant evangelist; he is invited to a ruler's house to a banquet, but probably on account of his lowly station in life the carpenter's son does not receive those courtesies from the host which are freely lavished upon every

honored guest (you are probably all aware that it is customary in the East to wash and often anoint the feet of a guest, and to neglect this attention is, among Orientals, a decided slight, or breach of etiquette), a grateful woman, grateful for moral and spiritual benefits, feels hurt at the implied insult to the man to whom she owes redemption from a life of misery and shame; being of an impulsive, ardent nature, she rushes for some costly ointment preserved in an alabaster box, breaks the box, pours out the ointment, kneels at his feet, anoints and kisses them, wiping them with her hair. The act itself was not perhaps the wisest one imaginable; there was doubtless much good sense and sound reasoning in the criticism of those who said the ointment was worth three hundred pence and should have been sold and the money given to the poor. With such a view of the abstract question no reformer could possibly disagree; but Jesus, who was a perfect mind-reader, rebuked those who would have never thought of selling it and giving away the proceeds themselves, but who put on a garb of mock sanctity, and when they were personally offended at some rebuke to their own discourtesy found fault with an impulsive sister who had not studied political economy perhaps, and therefore was not able to reflect beforehand as to just how the greatest good should be brought to the greatest number by the sale of a treasure worth three hundred pence, but who was nevertheless so filled with loving gratitude to her benefactor that she gave away the costliest thing she owned, gave it gladly and unsparingly, and in giving it showed a disposition worthy of commendation through all ages.

In the study of character, no matter whether we take our samples from ancient or modern history, poetry, allegory or romance, we must be extremely careful in drawing nice distinctions between acts and motives, between principles and persons. One of the greatest virtues of this age is its generous appreciation of real merit in dis-

tinguished persons ; at the same time one of its prevailing vices is the sycophantic adoration of great personages, occasioning baseless eulogies which gloss over follies and mistakes because they are the follies and mistakes of certain generally noble people.

Imitation is undoubtedly the sincerest flattery we can offer to any one, but all flattery, even the sincerest, has a touch of shallowness and superficiality in it ; we must learn to discriminate between the chaff and wheat in every field. Tares and wheat grow together in every character as well as in every community, and while we should at all times show our readiness to follow the good examples set by all the world's benefactors, we should most carefully set ourselves to avoid falling into their mistakes, and surely none are faultless. To bring the matter home to every individual, and especially to every grumbler who complains of the inefficiency and error of another's effort, does the grumbler sell his own ointment for three hundred pence and give that amount to the poor ? Does the man who calls all money spent in art, music, costly temples and other æsthetic works, throw his own possessions into the treasury of humanity and give his all to feed the hungry and clothe the naked ? Usually not. He generally shuts up his treasures in a bank or safe, takes no notice of appeals for aid, does not see a contribution box when one is passing round for charity ; he talks of giving to the poor, he condemns those who spend their money in a lawful, if not in the very best way, while he spends his own entirely on self-gratification or not at all.

Beware of the carping critic who is forever telling you what other people ought to do, while he does nothing himself. The true, earnest, generous worker is usually so much absorbed in doing good that he corrects unwisdom by precept, example and silent influence of the wisest type, but never belittles himself by crying down the work of others so as to call to himself attention he does not desire.

The practice of giving costly presents to friends at Christmas, on New Year's Day, and on the anniversary of a birth or wedding, or the sending of expensive valentines, may be looked upon by many as sheer extravagance, simple waste of money. We confess money had better be spent in useful than in useless things ; it is never well to encourage a love of luxury and display in yourself or others ; a gift can never be less acceptable as a token of friendship because it has an intrinsic usefulness apart from its value as friendship's offering.

We most certainly advise the giving of useful presents, and we go further : we decry the custom of giving presents at all when you cannot afford it without crippling your resources unduly, as unfortunately those who receive the most presents are generally those who are most abundantly supplied with earthly goods, and really do not need them ; still there is a poetry, a charm and a reality in a sincere gift of love which far, far outweighs any temporal consideration, whether you give a diamond worth hundreds of dollars or something costing but a single cent, when you mail it or present it to your friend it carries with it a value utterly beyond its marketable worth. It becomes a vehicle for the transmission of your thought, and is moreover a means whereby spiritual influences surrounding you can reach and help your friend ; it is a link binding you together, and no matter how widely sundered you may be by land or sea, this link of love will bind you across continents and oceans as *rappport* once established between any minds is never wholly lost, though it may sometimes appear temporarily suspended. This, of course, refers only to gifts which are given with an intention ; generous feelings, strong desires, add immeasurably to the influence exerted only by association and suggestion in the receiver's mind.

A psychical truth lies at the foundation of all the claims of magic ; talismans, charms, locks of hair, and so forth, have a value explicable only on a purely mental

hypothesis. In "Ghost Land," a rare work edited by Mrs. E. H. Britten, there are some thrilling narratives of the influence exerted by Occultists through very simple material instrumentalities; and while the author does not hesitate to show up the darker side of magic, he points to the blessings to be derived from a wise and proper use of a power which, though capable of being perverted to evil ends when employed by the unscrupulous, can when rightly directed be of incalculable service to humanity; magic is no exception to a universal rule.

Metaphysicians do well to warn the public against malpractice and mesmeric poisoning, but there is no danger attached to one class of human powers which is not liable to accrue from the misuse of all and any. How much truth we can tell, how much comfort we can give by a judicious use of the tongue, but on the other hand, how much evil results from slander, lying and misrepresentation; the remedy for the evil is not to cut out the tongue, but to control it; dumbness would put an end to all false and profane speaking, but the prerogative of speech is man's special glory, it is one of the special faculties by which he is distinguished from the animals. It will never do in this enlightened age to endeavor to suppress the natural energies and outgoings of man's nature, he must learn to discipline them all so that they will become instruments of righteousness instead of iniquity, but we must each one of us be ever carefully upon our guard lest in an unwary moment we yield before we know it to the powers of darkness; perpetual vigilance is indispensable to safety, only the vigilant and pure are safe against innumerable traps set for them by the vicious and the selfish all along the road.

The question of magnetized articles is one that seems to many people very difficult to settle. Psychometry is a comparatively new problem for the scientific world to solve. Dr. J. R. Buchanan and others have recently called considerable public attention to the theme, but it

is not easy to persuade the hard-headed materialist that there is any truth in so subtle a science; we ourselves, while fully crediting a large percentage of psychometric experiments with thorough genuineness and perfect satisfactoriness, attribute the success of such experiments to a mental link involuntarily connecting the psychometric reader with a mind possessing the information he obtains. We can get into and out of mental currents extending far into the spiritual atmosphere; when we set to work to find out something we bring ourselves into relation with minds possessing the information we seek, that is, when we are successful. To this interior solution of the problem may intelligently be referred all psychometric success and all success attending what is ordinarily termed fortune telling, for however ridiculous it may appear to certain wiseacres, even by cards, or tea and coffee grounds, results are obtained proving the action of an intelligence which is certainly in and of itself in no way bound to a teacup or a pack of cards.

The Roman Catholic Church has never denied the power of magic, but has strictly forbidden the laity to have anything to do with it; the church has always admitted mediumship in all its phases, but has denounced the exercise of spiritual powers except under its own control as a means of carrying out its own designs. The psychological power of the priesthood is enormous, while many of the cures actually performed at Lourdes, Knock and other celebrated shrines can be explained by those acquainted with mental healing with utmost readiness. The practice of saying certain prayers with a particular intention proves acquaintance with psychological law, the knowledge of which secret orders in the church, especially the Jesuits, have always carefully and thoroughly preserved; you can say a Pater Noster, or Ave Maria for a great many different objects; the words are always the same, but the intention varies, and therefore if the charm takes effect, or the prayer is answered, different results

follow at different times though the same words are invariably uttered ; this fact, which can easily be verified, opens up the widest conceivable field for psychic research as it brings before us a potent influence for good we can all employ ; we can exert our power upon the distant as well as upon the near, upon the departed as well as those who are yet in mortal tabernacles ; our thoughts go out like birds across the land, carrying seed thoughts which, if dropped in fertile soil whenever they may fall, cause new types of vegetation to appear to the astonishment of all beholders.

We are all of us both senders and receivers of spiritual valentines, we are all subjects of thoughts and impressions which we can but rarely trace to their primal starting point ; as Sankey's hymn says, "Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin," but being tempted is not sin at all ; we are often tempted to evil by thoughts which reach us from we know not where, and come to us we know not how ; as good kind letters are as often written as impure and malicious ones, if there be powers of the air, influences all around us prompting to evil and planning our destruction, we are never alone with them, neither are we in any vital danger except we suffer from weakness and evil tempers within ourselves ; the baser emotions of our own nature being the points of contact between us and all lower influence. Powers of light, good angels are never far away, the loving thoughts of absent friends are constantly reaching out to us and affecting us for good if we only will not drive them from us. The boy far from home who dreams of his mother is visited by her while his body, and possibly her's also is asleep, or if in waking hours he feels her presence her thought has gone out to him and reached him no matter where he or she may be.

We can all employ spiritual telegraphy, we can all put letters in a spiritual post office, and the invisible letter carriers are certain to deliver them. Let no one

underrate the power of silent mind ; depend less on speech and action and more on quiet persuasiveness of thought : conversation often offends ; you are often unable to speak or write to those you wish to serve and bless, but under all circumstances you can pray, and what is prayer but spiritual effort, the influence of the mind reaching out to touch some heart and accomplish some object.

You all know what it is to feel a person's sphere and to some extent to read it, you all know what it is to cook blessings into food, or curses if you are so evil disposed as to wish harm to another.

It is no mere delusion as some suppose when people feel happy in one place and miserable in another and that for no accountable reason. Mind is a palpable reality, thoughts are entities, and wherever we may be they reach us. Our individual experience is gained by so cultivating the spiritual good in our own nature that we quickly sense evil and have power to rise above it. Let us all resolve to do whatever we can to heal and bless our fellow beings ; if we act with generous resolves the way will assuredly be made plain, opportunities will occur in God's good time for word and action, but as all virtue dwells primarily in the thought, let us never cease to employ our minds in scattering seeds of kindness ; these will assuredly bring forth a glorious harvest for our reaping by and bye.

THE PROBLEM OF GOOD AND EVIL.

THE problem of good and evil is the one hard, old, unsolved riddle of the world. Philosophers and theologians of every age, race and school have endeavored to grapple with it, but despite all attempts at a satisfactory solution it still remains as unsolved as ever to the masses of mankind, if we may judge from the prevalent agitation which everywhere abounds concerning the present disturbed and perplexing state of the human family the wide world over.

We are on every hand confronted with boundless obstacles. Our power is so weak, our knowledge so limited, our horizon so small, that though some can see further ahead than others, all alike, spirits and mortals, learned and illiterate, must confess themselves in total ignorance of where Life comes from, or how it originates in the universe. At the same time though the absolute eternity of life may be beyond all finite grasp, knowledge is constantly increasing, as to where, when and how types of life originate on earth. For while the physical scientist is dilating learnedly on Evolution, spiritual teaching is being furnished to all minds prepared to receive it, concerning Involution, which precedes Evolution.

Some persons still profess to see no point of agreement between Religion and Science. They deem the one altogether opposed to the other, whereas they both are in perfect union; and could we but stand high enough upon some imposing mental elevation, we should see where the two sides of a stupendous arch meet above the clouds; while observers in the valleys see the sides of the arch separately, but can trace no connection between them.

This pointed and beautiful illustration is one of the most appropriate and telling ever brought forward by divines, when discussing the vexed question of Divine sovereignty and human free-agency. We can think of no happier or more lucid one, and thus we have introduced it to you as a fitting simile in this discourse.

Henry Ward Beecher, one of the most gifted and deservedly popular preachers of the present day — we may say, *the* most popular preacher in America — has very wisely said, that creeds begin at the wrong end: they commence with statements concerning Infinitude and Eternity, and then work downwards to the earth, and deal at last with practical questions of human brotherhood. It would be very incorrect to suppose that streams do not take their rise amid lofty mountains, and derive their birth from clouds which float above the earth, and then gradually descend into the valleys; but to those who dwell in valleys, and cannot climb the steep mountain paths, which lead to the source of rivers, their birth-places are necessarily inaccessible; and thus the dwellers in the lower countries, into which the streams descend, have to work their way up from the river's estuary to its source, thus tracing the progress of the current backwards.

The estuary of the Nile is easy to discover; its source has always been a mystery. It is ever so with man on earth, in relation to things spiritual. The mind dwelling on earth, accustomed during the waking hours of the body to contemplate everything from an external and material point of view, can only be brought to see the truth of spiritual ideas by physical analogy, and is compelled to work inwards, from the circumference to the centre; while the Divine Soul, which is seldom heard from directly by the ordinary human intellect, does calculate from the point where the creeds of churches begin, and works its way outwards from the centre to the circumference.

On earth, everything spiritual is seen inverted. The material world appears to the external thinker as the basis or resting-place of the entire pyramid of existence; while, in the spiritual state, the emancipated and truly illumined mind sees that everything reposes on a spiritual foundation, material objects appearing but as tiny outgrowths from the tree of existence, scarcely more than parasites upon a vine.

You have often heard it recorded, that spirits, when detailing their experiences shortly after entering spirit-life, have said that their lenses of observation have been totally reversed; that everything solid, real, objective appears to those in the body ephemeral and subjective, while the so-called realities of the material state appear to the spirit as little more than chimera or delusion. It is therefore impossible for minds deeply imbued with materialistic philosophy, sunk in the night of atheistic arrogance, to behold spiritual objects in their true proportions; but still the Spirit has a message for the Atheist, and stoops to overcome the blindness of him who grovels in the dust of Materialism, by taking the very dust of the ground itself, explaining its properties, and demonstrating, by reference to its motions, the necessity for admitting the existence of a power beyond it, which moulds and fashions it according to the behests of mind. If this power were altogether foreign to man, it could never be demonstrated to his consciousness; but man himself possesses it in a measure; it is the breath in him which causes him to live, and the sole source whence he derives a virility superior to common animality; while even the animal in a lower degree possesses this power of life or mind, and by it is enabled to make provision for its wants, and in a measure control the vegetable kingdom.

It needs no argument to show, that Will is the potent sovereign, armed with invincible might: ruler, creator, lord of all things. Man is a god when compared with the lower animals. A well-developed man, who has ex-

perienced an intellectual and moral growth, is a god to the untutored savage. What is it that makes man, but will, intellect, reason, intelligence? Without superior mentality, man, with his small, feeble, almost defenceless body, would be the vassal of every fierce and powerful monster of the earth and sea. Is civilized man a larger, stronger being than the savage? Not at all: many a cannibal is more powerful bodily than the finest specimen of Circassian or Anglo-Saxon, while an ourang-outang, or wild-man-of-the-woods, is far better defended by nature than a cultured European or American.

Man, physically, is a pigmy; his strength is but weakness. He is the most poorly defended of all creatures on the earth: and yet he is lord and master, sovereign and victor over all. But what men are the most victorious? Surely good and great men, those whose purity and bravery have made them irresistible. Moral and mental distinctions are as evident to savages, and even to animals, as they are to your fellow-beings. The lower types of character instinctively yield to the higher, while the utmost ferocity of the brute can be tamed, and is tamed, by highly-unfolded men and women.

We perceive on every hand that Freedom is a strictly relative quality, and an ever-varying quantity. Dominion can ever be exerted over the inferior by the superior; and though man belongs to a superior type in nature, unless he lives in accordance with his prerogatives as man, he is unable to exercise his rightful authority over the lower species.

Kindness is always a test of greatness; cruelty is in all cases an evidence of meanness, and is a most conclusive proof of smallness of soul and inferiority of intellect. Were we to be asked to select rulers from among the boys and youths of the period, we should invariably choose the gentlest and most humane. One has only to read the biographies of great men and women, those who have risen to high station by reason of innate nobility, -

and their rendering of important benefit to society, to become convinced that gentleness and greatness are invariably inseparable.

The first beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount is a very singular benediction, and one that requires careful consideration before it can be accepted as a truth; but the poverty of spirit eulogized in the Gospel is surely that conspicuous absence of pride, self-assertion, and the tyrannical and domineering spirit (so often resorted to by pretenders to a greatness which is in no sense theirs), which commends the really great to the honor of all mankind.

True greatness never needs to advertise itself, except by exhibiting, as it ever does in daily life, the meek and lowly spirit which forgets self in remembrance of others. Self must be lost in art or in philanthropy, in the pursuit of knowledge, in schemes for universal well-being; or intellects must remain petty, and man's true dominion must be unknown. To inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, to be a ruler in a kingdom which is not of the outer and lower world, to have no crown, no title, no regal robes wherewith to make a mark in the eyes of those who adore wealth and pomp, and yet to be a monarch, is to have attained to a height of grandeur, of true and noble manhood, which expresses on earth something of the nature of government in spheres celestial.

Admitting the existence of a Supreme Ruler of the universe, the mind naturally arrives at the conclusion, that there can be only one Almighty. We know the fallacies of Atheism can by sophistry be rendered so attractive as to win the admiration of many an aspiring but unbalanced and inexperienced mind; but no God, in plain English, means a supreme devil. Everybody believes either in God or the Devil. No one can really believe in both, as the mind naturally arrives at the conclusion that the universe is ruled by something, or by some one, and that the power that rules supreme in every

department of nature is one, and has no equal and no rival. To believe in God, as the Supreme Ruler, requires simply that the mind accept as a truth the self-evident proposition, that out of nothing nothing can proceed, and the kindred truism, that for every effect there must be an adequate cause.

We know there are some people who talk about the possible evolution of consciousness from "unconscious mind," which is to us a phrase that we can scarcely speak of more respectfully than to call it nonsensical; for, who ever has had any dealings with "unconscious mind"? To ask us to believe in the existence of something against which our reason revolts, and to ask us to accept so purely hypothetical and incredible an origin for intelligence, is to seek to establish not the age of reason but of unreason. Good old Thomas Paine endeavored to found an Age of Reason upon Deism — natural religion, not upon such baseless absurdity as the modern Materialist's sandy foundation for the new temple of knowledge. Herbert Spencer's Unknowable, though not so ridiculous, is an almost equally unsatisfactory basis for existence, but though the tendency of Atheism as a system is simply absurd, many Atheists are excellent people. We condemn the system as irrational. We value the men, who are so unfortunate as to have espoused it, on account of their goodness of heart, which often more than compensates for their philosophical blindness; but we must not denounce modern Infidelity too sweepingly, without remembering what has produced it, and how it has grown up in Christendom. Before Atheism was fashionable, Calvinism was a prevailing form of faith; and though many daring deeds were done by the followers of the great apostle of Geneva, the doctrine of reprobation was so fearful a blot upon the Calvinistic escutcheon, that we do not wonder the whole coat-of-arms has been torn down, and the flag of so revolting a system trampled in the dust.

Calvinism was by no means new when it was preached at Geneva, between 300 and 400 years ago. About 600 A. D., Mahomet had preached fatalism in southern Europe and Arabia, and this doctrine had long before the sixteenth century made its influence felt in three continents. Europe, Asia and Africa have all claimed to serve Allah, by shedding blood for the remission of sins, and have all united in holding to the fearful tenet, that wars of extermination were pleasing to the Most High. But before Mohammedanism was Roman Catholicism, and before Catholicism was Judaism, and the Jewish nation had contracted ideas from Egypt, Persia, and many other sources; and all ancient religions, though in their essence pure systems of metaphysics and ethics, were in their outward embodiments combinations of light and darkness, beauty and deformity, truth and error.

We are constantly hearing to-day of Egypt and the Egyptian religion. We are told by many students that Judaism and Christianity are both of Egyptian origin; and as Egypt was a flourishing and extensive empire before Palestine or Europe were seats of government and education, we can see no reason for disputing the prevailing tendency among scholars to regard Egypt as one of the most prolific sources whence religious ideas as well as forms and ceremonies have slowly made their way to the British Isles and modern America. It is universally acknowledged, by those who have taken pains to inquire into the Egyptian religion, that it was originally at its best an abstruse and complicated religio-scientific embodiment of esoteric verities. Solar worship is a scientific recognition of astronomical facts, and more interiorly a portrayal of the progress of the human spirit from celestial infancy to celestial maturity. Being both exoteric and esoteric, truth can be discovered in Pyramid and Sphinx, in ancient temple, obelisk and parchment, alike, concerning literal history, astronomical and astrological

phenomena, and spiritual truths which relate to the interior life of man and of the universe. All ancient literature and hieroglyph being intended to serve a triple purpose : first, to set forward spiritual truths ; second, to set forth scientific facts ; third, to record historical events. All sacred writings appeal to the spirit, the intellect and the senses ; they therefore deal with certain facts, which can only be understood by the soul ; with other facts, which make their appeal to the intellect ; and, again, with sensuous occurrences, which are matters of earthly appearance and history. The inner truths are alone of permanent value ; and could they be fully grasped, their correspondences in mind and matter would be as clear as daylight.

The material world is a world of appearances, correspondences, effects. The spiritual realm is the realm of causation. Pantheism is based upon the truth of the divine immanence, and grasps this one fact which doubtless is a mighty truth, that mind dwells in everything, so that everything may be said to constitute an infinite whole, which is itself divine.

Positivism, a very popular modern form of belief among the semi-cultured, is founded on the truth of the Divine indwelling in humanity. It enlarges the idea of divine embodiment, until all the human race appears to the Positivist as worshipful. He sees in all mankind, in man collectively, the Divine life, as the Pantheist sees it also in the inanimate creation.

Pantheism and Positivism both contain elements of truth, which should entitle them to respectful consideration, and not to contemptuous rejection on the score of prejudice. Even Atheism has originated in a desire to get rid of the devil, but in the attempt to do so the Atheist has lost sight of the only reason why there can be no devil, and that is, the supremacy of God : because God exists, the devil cannot. If God does not exist, some devil must. Whence comes the word God ? From good.

God only means the supremely good. To admit the existence of God, we have only to acknowledge the supremacy of good in the universe.

Theism and Optimism are one. We have heard people who are usually styled unbelievers go so far as to say they believe this world is the best possible world in the best possible universe, and that whatever is is right. The motto, "Whatever is is right," signifies that things exist because they ought to exist; and they could not exist if they ought not to. This brings us to a result, that no one needs to gainsay, that everything exists for a purpose, that nothing is useless, that everything is positively indispensable, and the laws of nature could not possibly be better than they are. Such conclusions are indeed comforting. They give one a vast amount of joy in contemplating existence, and they may all be safely accepted as undeniable postulates of Theism. From the standpoint of angelic life they are evidently true, and no denizen of a celestial sphere would think of questioning them. On the other hand, men may exclaim: It may be easy enough for angels, if there are such beings, comfortably off in heaven, to take so easy and complacent a view of their situation; but, if they exist, are they not anything but highly moral creatures, to be so totally wrapped up in their own enjoyments as to care nothing for the misery of millions of sentient creatures on the earth, whose burdens break their backs, and who can see neither reason nor recompense for their apparently unmerited afflictions?

Could the repining, cavilling ones, who reason thus, and we will not say unnaturally, hold communion with those bright and joyful beings whom we have called by the popular name of angels, they would soon discover an adequate reason for the celestial complacency, which at first sight appears like heartless indifference to all but their own interests. "These are they who have come from great tribulation, and have washed their robes and

made them white in the blood of the lamb ; they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, &c." These words, from the Apocalypse, apply to all who are now enjoying the delights of realms celestial. They have suffered, they have hungered, they have thirsted ; but they have attained to angelhood, through overcoming, till purity within and without is the accompaniment of knowledge in their happy being. They are no callous lovers of self, but having overcome those very temptations with which every spirit on earth is now in some measure struggling, they have reached an altitude from which they can look down into the valleys of humiliation, briar-bestrewn and dark, where once they journeyed with weary feet and toil-worn hearts ; and while they compassionate and soothe, so far as they are able, the toilers who are toiling, just as they toiled once, they would not release mankind from the burdens under which they groan, even if they could, because, unless a cross be carried, a crown can ne'er be won.

We say, with all reverence, that God, who has brought all beings into existence, must satisfy the natures of the creatures he has formed, or he is not God.

The Calvinistic and Mohammedan ideas of election and reprobation are far more odious than Atheism, and yet they have grown up naturally, and are, in the realm of ethics, correspondences to Ptolemy's mistakes concerning the material universe. They spring from very little light, a jumping at conclusions, and a confounding of temporal appearances with eternal verities.

Swedenborg, who let in almost more light on this subject than any other man, never wholly freed his mind from errors inculcated in childhood, though he was always on the alert to uproot them whenever he found any in the creeds of Christian churches ; he, like Dante, was a highly gifted seer, and he saw into hells as well as heavens, and did not see the way of escape for those who, so far as he could judge, had eternally confirmed themselves in the

love of evil. Could spirits so confirm themselves as to eternally be satisfied with wickedness and its results, there would be neither cruelty nor injustice in God allowing them to live in the element they enjoyed forever. No one would feel sorry that if a fish were immortal, it would swim forever in the ocean; though to give it fins and confine it on dry land would be decided cruelty.

But in our answer to the Swedenborgian modification of Calvinism, we boldly affirm it to be impossible for God, if he is a God of perfect holiness, to create beings who could eternally choose or love holiness. The apostle is quite logical, and none too bold, when he makes the assertion that, God being infinite truth, it is impossible for him to lie. The infinite attributes of an infinite being necessitate infinite limitations; and the reason why the infinite limitations of God are not beheld and revealed in theologies, is because man has been deriving his ideas of Deity from fickle spirits, who have intercepted his vision of the Eternal One; or rather his eyes have been so weak, his sight so short, that he has not been able to see further up into the spiritual realm than into the abodes of those who are capricious, because they have not yet attained to moral stability, which is a result of spiritual unfoldment greater than they have yet reached.

The Jewish Bible is a curious compound: it teaches of one only God, a being of infinite perfections, whose pure majestic attributes all blend like varying hues of color into a unity of perfect dazzling white. Infinite Truth, Eternal Justice, such phrases as these can only express the highest Hebrew thought of God. Let us bow before this infinite Being only; let us love the infinitely good with all our hearts and minds; let us allow the love of the Eternal to so infill our being as to leave no crevice for hatred or revenge, so that in consequence of this boundless affection for the Eternal, we shall love every human being with pure and quenchless love, and be merci-

ful to every creature which can experience sensations of pain or pleasure.

But can we thus obey the highest law, without turning in loathing and disgust from the immoral commands of those "gods many and lords many," who have set aside the counsel of the highest, and as spiritual usurpers, blind leaders of the blind, have led man to make war with his neighbor, and put him to death, pretending that thereby they were following in the footsteps of that Jehovah, who commanded his servant Moses to include in the Decalogue the sixth commandment: "Thou shalt not kill," or "Thou shalt do no murder"?

How sadly have God and the devil got mixed in popular theology, often to the almost effectual banishment of God and the setting up his rival in man's regard on the throne of the universe. In the old Persian faith, Ormuzd and Ahriman were said to reign together, each of whom created six gods, or subordinate deities, thus proving their equal power; but there were minds who could so read the Zendavesta, and interpret the wisdom of Zoroaster, that they saw in these two rival powers, and their progeny, only a declaration concerning transitory states of being, as viewed from the standpoint of imperfect man; while towering, like an infinite mountain above surrounding hillocks, its summit so far beyond the clouds, that no mortal eye could discern it, was the thought of one perfect being who had reigned before the brothers, Ormuzd and Ahriman, had quarrelled, and who would reign forever when peace should have been restored between them. Ormuzd was a type of Spirit, Ahriman of Matter. The offspring of Ormuzd signify moral faculties, and the offspring of Ahriman, the sensual proclivities of man. Ormuzd and Ahriman had not always quarrelled, and the time would come when their disputes would cease, showing that Spirit and Matter are not eternally antagonistic, but susceptible of perfect reconciliation.

The Devil is discord, disease, dirt,—in a word, anything and everything out of place. God never made a devil when he made the universe, according to the Mosaic and all other cosmogonies. How is it that Genesis, while carefully enumerating all the types of existence on earth, and the constellations above, attributing their origin to a Divine Spirit, and declaring that God made everything, and behold it was very good, says nothing at all about a devil? The creation of the serpent is mentioned, as “creeping things” would include snakes: but these were “very good.” Thus, a serpent in itself was not a type of evil, and a serpent only became an “accursed thing” after it was enthroned in the affections as a lord, and followed instead of the voice of God.

The serpent has always been a symbol of matter and of sensual wisdom. When it is coiled round the head or worn upon the breast, it denotes a person given over to sensuality. It is found in art and allegory, alive under the foot of the mother of the world's redeemer, but in complete subjection to her will. The woman, in art and allegory, is human affection. The child, to whom she gives birth, is intellect, under control of the moral sense. The “rod of iron,” with which the male child rules, is the invincible might which a ruler will have when he is himself completely ruled by conscience.

The philosophers spoke well when they told how good and evil demons surround the path of every mortal. Our good angel, the good demon of Socrates, is our own sense of right, our evil genius is our uncontrolled earthly passion. Whenever we follow the counsel of our conscience, we link ourselves to hosts of angels, and become receptive to their guidance and their wisdom; whenever we yield to earthly appetite, and spurn the rule of conscience, then, and only then, do we attract the powers of darkness, and give them power to harm us. The source of heavenly guidance and of temptation is alike within,

and we need but to do our best to-day, to be prepared to comprehend and evolve a better state to-morrow.

Satan is an accusing angel, but not the malicious enemy of souls he is usually pictured as being. The book of Job clearly illustrates his usefulness and mission. He was the best friend Job ever had. The book of Job is a splendid Hebrew poem, a drama, an allegory, in which the *dramatis personæ* are the varied faculties of human nature ; though very probably Job was an actual character, and one whose great afflictions, and the prosperity he enjoyed after them, made of him a living example of a profound and universal truth.

Satan is whatsoever urges us to act contrary to our sense of right, while the perfect way is the way pointed out by conscience. We cannot use a power we do not possess, and to clearly illustrate the limits of human responsibility, what can be more beautifully expressive than the parable of the men with different numbers of talents, all being made equal, while he who had only one, and made no use of it at all, was the only one who received a rebuke and merited punishment? And what can be more expressive than the phrase : "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" ?

To have expected twenty-one talents from him who at the outset had only ten would have been unjust ; while, had he brought only nineteen, he would have been less worthy than his neighbor who, having only two to start with, made them four. We cannot be responsible for the use of opportunities which are not ours ; but we are responsible for using opportunities, for acquiring knowledge, as well as for the use we make of the knowledge we have acquired.

Conscience has the power to make us happy or wretched, *here or hereafter* ; only, when the body dies, being deprived of all earthly distractions, we are thrown in upon ourselves, and hear the voice of Spirit more distinctly. It

is the voice of God within that pronounces us profitable or unprofitable servants, and on entering spirit-life every spirit realizes that no frowning accuser stands there to keep any soul from mingling with the angels. The only question for each one of you will be: What capacities have you for soaring, or for climbing the celestial steeps? If we were not discontented when we did wrong, we should never aspire to right. Shame, remorse, and all penalties, are means of elevation; and, as such, are means of grace, and stepping-stones to ultimate happiness.

Our closing word shall be one of practical application. God is not unjust, and will not punish the victim for the victimizer's sin. He who does the wrong is in reality the only sufferer. You cannot be too sharp for God; you cannot surprise infinite foreknowledge; and, therefore, you would not be permitted to injure a fellow-creature, unless that very suffering, which you occasion, could be turned, and would be, to his good. We all know that man is largely a creature of circumstances, and his environment influences his conduct. It is, therefore, a duty and necessity to use every possible means to entice to virtue and not to vice. The working out of the problem, in its relation to individual applications of divine justice, we must reserve for our treatise upon "*Karma*, or the Law of Sequence," leaving with you to-night only the wholesome reflection, that every kindness shown to another is a following of divine goodness, and brings an inevitable reward, while the wrong-doer, not the victim, is the one who really suffers, by retarding his own spiritual advancement.

IMPROMPTU POEM.

Suggested by the inquiry of a little child of her father: "WHY
GOD DID NOT KILL THE DEVIL?"

Why does not God the devil kill?
The child in innocence doth ask;
If God indeed Almighty is,
He must be equal to his task;
If he is Sovereign Lord of all,
Creating all things by his power,
How can he have an enemy,
Who enters his most sacred bower,
And blights the flowers he loves so well,
Until they must be burned in hell?

O child, thy questions are too deep
Both for the pulpit and the pew?
God's Word alone proclaims the fact
A devil lives — it brings to view
His personality in form
Of dragon, serpent, talking snake,
As Satan, adversary fierce,
Who doth the faith of mortals shake,
And lures them by enticing spell
Into the dark domains of hell.

My question is unanswered still;
Who made this devil, I inquire.
If God hath made him then 'tis he
Who doth iniquity inspire,
And yet I'm told that he is Love,
Wisdom and Purity divine.
Whence cometh, then, this evil force?
For if God's love on all doth shine,
This Satan cannot evil be
Throughout the vast eternity.

The priest protests unto the child
That devils once were angels bright,
As Milton dreamed, in Lucifer
The morning star, they dwell in light,

But through their pride they disobeyed
 The mandates of their king supreme,
 And he for this did cast them out
 Into the dark abyss, whose beam
 Of lurid flame proclaims for aye
 They must in hopeless evil lie.

The child with intuitions keen
 Sees through this veil, whose thin disguise
 Conceals the wretched sophistry
 From those whose clouded mortal eyes
 With theologic dust are filled.
 If God is good, there is no ill
 That will not into goodness turn ;
 The devil once was good and pure,
 And once again God's love will burn
 Within his breast, Omega be
 As Alpha through eternity.

Oh ! what is evil ? simply this —
 The chaos undeveloped yet,
 The nebulae of forming worlds ;
 Intelligence must needs beget
 Imperfect forms, while passing through
 The schools of infancy below,
 But after earthly scenes are passed,
 All souls in perfect light will glow ;
 When imperfections cease to be,
 No devil shall we longer see.

The Typhon of old Egypt's clime,
 The Satan of the Book of Job,
 The devil of the Siamese,
 Ahriman who with Ormuzd strove,
 Will pass into oblivion's night,
 While all the powers of good remain ;
 The great All Good, pervading all
 His universe, will never stain
 With endless evil, night will fly
 When morning glory streameth nigh.

Oh ye who sit with folded hands,
 Bemoaning evils on your way,
 Arise from sluggishness and fear,
 And drive, by work, these fiends away.
 There is no spirit anywhere
 God does not own and will not save;
 There is no soul engulfed in gloom
 That will not rise from out its grave,
 And ultimately brightly shine —
 An angel clad in light divine.

Why does not God the devil kill?
 He leaves for us that work to do —
 Inharmony the devil is.
 When we its darksome reign subdue,
 When we our lower passions curb,
 Subdue the senses to the soul,
 The devil dies; God doth arise
 Within our lives and doth control
 All things, till they in order move,
 Then we the perfect life can prove.

Good-bye, ye nightmares of the past,—
 No devils have we need to fear,
 Besides our own unbridled lusts;
 No darkling spirit brooding near
 Hath power to harm us if we strive
 To fellowship with all that's good.
 Surely at length souls will thrive
 In righteousness; the path pursued
 By every life, at length will tend
 To wisdom that can never end.

True Philosophy of Mental Healing.

We are so often asked the questions, "What do you think of mental healing? How do you explain it? How do you reconcile metaphysics with spiritualism?" while a host of similar questions keeps pouring in upon us, almost incessantly, both verbally and by letter, that we cannot refrain from expressing our opinions, from time to time, on these important and interesting themes, with a view to their publication in some popular and widely-circulating periodical. We do not of course propose in an essay occupying only about one half hour in delivery, to enter fully into all the intricate problems of thought on these topics which are to-day agitating the public mind. We can only hope, in this preliminary effort, to stimulate interest far enough to induce some among our hearers and readers to apply themselves diligently to a study of metaphysical science, and to endeavor to prove the truth of our premises by successful experimentation.

Experience, as is often said, is indeed the test of truth; but we must be willing to apply the test honestly and fearlessly or we can never obtain satisfactory results. It is a fact admitting of no dispute, that in Boston alone, at the present time, there are hundreds of persons ready at any time, and in any place, to assert that they owe to mental science an amount of mental and bodily health and vigor to which they were utter strangers while under the dominion of popular ideas concerning *Materia Medica*. The recent laws against irregular medical practice in several States have induced many magnetic and clairvoyant physicians to turn their attention more fully to purely spiritual methods of cure, leading them to abandon, to a greater or less degree, all hold upon what is ordinarily included in the term "medicine."

The works of Dr. Evans, which are having a very large circulation, have done even more than those of Mrs. Eddy, to popularize a knowledge of what Dr. Evans terms, "The Divine Law of Cure." The term, "Christian Science," adopted by Mrs. Eddy and her followers, is objectionable to some minds, though peculiarly attractive to others. We do not employ it to designate our own school of philosophy. We prefer *Universal Theosophy*, which we consider a wider and altogether unsectarian term, though often confounded with occultism, a much more limited term, signifying the science of things hidden. Theosophy, as you are doubtless aware, means divine wisdom; being derived from two Greek words, "*theos*," God, and "*sophia*," Wisdom. Theosophy is therefore the science of God, of spirit, of divine things. To be a Theosophist, one must be acquainted with the spiritual universe and study its laws, and in proportion to his understanding of spiritual truth and his surrender to it, and in this ratio only, can he be a successful healer by metaphysical or theosophical methods.

Mind versus Matter is the great case now being tried in all the courts of learning in the modern world. Mind or matter, which? is the great issue of the day. On this one issue hangs all true science, philosophy, and religion. Temporize as we may, temporizing cannot last forever, and a temporizing policy is never a logical or conclusive one. Are we Spirit, or are we Matter? Does matter produce mind, or does mind create matter? These are questions we must answer; half-way answers will not do. Physics or Metaphysics; Materialism or Spiritualism, which? We cannot have both; one must stand, the other must fall; both cannot stand together, as they affirm diametrically opposing postulates. Spiritualism, so-called, is often only a system of Materialism with a fragment of Spiritualism tacked on by way of ornament; in other cases, it is a mass of erroneous theological dogma, with an illogical belief in spirit communion added by way of supplement. We do not wonder that

this is so, as we cannot forget the previous training the majority of persons have had before embracing the fact of spirit communion; but an endeavor to support, promulgate and perpetuate so unsatisfying a creed must of necessity result in the utmost mental confusion.

Longfellow stated the truth in two lines of his sublime poem, "The Psalm of Life," "Dust thou art, to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul." The point of emphasis needs to be laid on the third word of the first line in this quotation, "Dust thou ART," was not spoken of the soul, it cannot be truly affirmed of the soul; therefore as an inevitable consequence, "to dust returnest," cannot be spoken of the soul. Everything goes back to its original elements; a stream cannot rise higher than its source; an effect cannot be greater than its cause. Now the materialistic supposition, a palpable error even on its surface, is, that matter is everything; that the basis of all life is crude, unconscious matter; that the universe is governed by some incomprehensible, blind force which, without possessing any intelligence whatsoever, is capable of evolving consciousness out of unconsciousness; life out of death; spirit out of matter.

Our reason rebels against all such absurdity; no scientist worthy of the name ever propagates such trash. Huxley, Spencer, Tyndall and a host of other noted men, who, by the way, are only specialists after all, and excel only in their own peculiar departments of research, disclaim Materialism as much as Spiritualism. They call themselves Agnostics; that is, they confess they do not know what the basis of existence really is; on primal causation they are confessedly ignorant, and thus leave the coast clear and the road open for all who can delve deeper than they into the mysteries of man's spiritual anatomy.

The first great affirmation of true Spiritualism or genuine Metaphysical science is, I am spirit, I am not matter; spirit is substance, matter is shadow; spirit is eternal, matter, temporal; mind is immortal, the body,

ortal. Science in its physical researches may find a primordial cell, common to all organisms, and pronounce this the basis of all organic life; but protoplasm is an effect, it is not a cause, of life. Labrack in France, Darwin in England, and others who have come after them, may have gone very far to demonstrate the truth of the evolutionary hypothesis, and indeed the germination of the human foetus in the maternal womb goes far to substantiate this conclusion, as the embryo itself assumes a variety of forms resembling those of lower animals before the human shape is perfected; but all such facts utterly fail to do more than enable the student of material sense to trace the genealogy of form; the underlying principle of being is as much a mystery as ever; so we are confounded in our scientific colleges with the great, mysterious, unsolved problem of causation, fully as much as when, in the divinity class, where old-fashioned theology is expounded, we are told that "nothing" was the element out of which God made everything.

Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, all the great minds of Greece with which we are familiar through the classics, have asserted that the soul itself, the individual ego, called by the Hindoos the *atma*, or seventh and highest principle, in man, has always existed and forever will. We hear much of atoms, units, and primaries in scientific *parlance*; but what these units are, has never been demonstrated, as they have eluded every physical research, and what is more, they always will; for they exist only in the realm of mind; they are living ideas; spiritual entities, immortal thoughts of Deity.

As soon as we cease to think of ourselves as matter, and regard ourselves as pure spirit, we shall have demonstrated our immortality to our own consciousness and found the only key which will unlock the chambers of perfect health, rest, and happiness in our own natures. All is God, there is no Devil; all is good, there is no evil. Here is a central truth, a definite affirmation, ex-

pressing in a sentence, the only rational philosophy of existence.

Let us for a moment turn our attention to this great and wondrous axiom which lies at the foundation of all true understanding of the universe. Evolution and Mo-
saism alike teach the supremacy of good. Genesis says that God made everything and blessed it, and behold, it was very good. In his enumeration of the works of creation, the author of the Pentateuch mentions no devil and no infernal realms. The devil was an after-thought, a creation of the human fancy; a product of truth inverted; of powers perverted. The Bible makes God all in all, and by affirming the divine immanence in all worlds denies the imputation of false theology that there can be an everlasting force or condition of evil in the universe. Evil is not from eternity, therefore not to eternity; it began in time, and will therefore end in time; while good, the absolutely infinite, and immortal, never having had beginning, can never know an end.

What says evolution? Surely nothing in opposition to the aforesaid truth of the supremacy of goodness. It is evolution that informs us that only the perfect will survive; that all imperfection is unfit to survive and that every rudimentary form of life fades away to make room for a superior type. What says phrenology or cerebral science? Does it not point its students to a large variety of organs in the human brain, every one of which is good and necessary; evil not inhering in the nature of an organ itself, but being simply a state or condition of an organ or organs?

To remove evil, then, it is not necessary to remove an organ or element, but only to change its relative condition, and this can only be done by drawing attention to a faculty suffering repression, as the supplying of an undersupplied part will of necessity moderate the pressure where the strain has been abnormal. In treating disease metaphysically it is never right to call the patient's attention to his malady, but invariably to direct his thought away from sense to spirit.

It is not our purpose in this brief essay to unfold in fullness of detail all the methods which metaphysicians of various schools can successfully employ, but only to point our hearers and readers to the central truth in the metaphysical system, viz., the absolute supremacy of mind over matter. When specially addressing Spiritualists, we have only to urge them to remember that Spiritualism begins and ends with the affirmation of metaphysical truth. What is a spiritual manifestation but a demonstration of metaphysics? Is it not mind over matter which occasions every phase of spiritualistic phenomena? Is it not emphatically asserted by the spiritualistic community everywhere that from table-tipping and mysterious knocking to full form-materialization, spirit is exerting sway over the substances of the material world? Read every explanation ever put forward in defence of spirit control, and you will find it a metaphysical argument. Let Metaphysicians and Spiritualists unite; they are ever aliens to each other: they are fellow students of the selfsame laws of being. Like the bulk of those styling themselves Theosophists, mental teachers and healers are apt to lay particular stress upon the mind as it works through the material organism and yet independent of it, to the disregard, and sometimes unfortunately to the denial, of the work performed by disembodied spirits; while many Spiritualists err on the side of overlooking the powers of the embodied human spirit. Let these half truths be put together, then we shall have a sphere, a circle of truth, whose majesty and brilliancy will include all branches of mental science, and make us give credit where credit is due; we shall not then undervalue or ignore any portion of the truth, for no portion of the truth can rightfully be disregarded: as the guides of many a reliable spirit medium have frequently asseverated, Mental Healing and Spiritual Power are one.

We therefore contend that no Spiritualist is consistent with his own system who denies the absolute power of

mind over matter by reposing faith in material remedies, even though prescribed by clairvoyants or persons avowedly under spirit control. The theory of Spiritualism has ever been, that mediums perform their work simply as the instruments of the spirit world. This conclusion was firmly adhered to in the early days of the modern Spiritual movement. A notable instance of this we find in the life of Dr. J. R. Newton, entitled, "The Modern Bethesda, or the Gift of Healing restored," in which the claim is put forward that Dr. Newton, one of the most successful healers the Spiritualists have ever numbered in their ranks, was a living illustration of New Testament healing in modern days. Dr. Newton goes so far as to claim that he was controlled by Jesus Christ, and that Jesus healed in the nineteenth century on the same principles as in the first. Now it is well enough for objectors to say that we cannot prove that the healing gift made mention of in the New Testament was ever a reality. We have to deal with modern demonstrations; our science is founded upon overwhelmingly conclusive testimony, not that this power did exist, but that it does exist and is now being exercised, and we are ready to demonstrate by quotations from modern spiritualistic literature itself, containing testimonials from those who have been benefited through healing mediums, that those mediums who rely most on spirit and least on medicines, and indeed that those who rely entirely on their guides and not upon their physical magnetism aided by electrical and galvanical appliances, have invariably been the most successful. Let us briefly review the modes of healing commended in the New Testament. We certainly never read of Jesus recommending his disciples to that abomination of the schools which bears the name of *materia medica*; we never read of cases containing medicines or surgical instruments being carried from place to place as necessary appliances by Jesus or his followers. We are certainly not led to infer that they wrote prescriptions either in foreign languages or their

native tongue, or that they patronized the establishments of apothecaries. Jesus did, according to the narrative, on some few occasions employ what might be termed material means to assist cures, but what were these material means? We are told on one occasion that he took the spittle from his mouth, mingled it with the dust of the ground, made clay, and anointed the eyes of a blind man whom he restored to sight by this process; but surely the use of such means as these must have been intended to teach that the true healer has his medicine always with him, that the power is in himself, and that the very dust of the earth can be rendered as available if he manipulates it as the rarest and most expensive remedies. If our modern doctors could restore blind men to sight through the agency of saliva and dust, there would certainly be no further need of either pharmacists or pharmacy laws, and surely no opportunity for the elaborate pretense of mystifying Latin prescriptions. On another occasion Jesus sent a patient to a pool of water, telling him to "wash and be clean," which, even if regarded as a mere command to take a bath, cannot possibly be said to do more than enforce the proverb, "cleanliness is next to godliness." A bath in pure fresh water, or in the sea, may do good and certainly will do no harm; but we see advertisements of medicated sulphur and vapor baths, and are politely informed that we require to take one: we decline the honor and prefer to follow the simple prescription of Jesus. So much for the material remedies endorsed by the gospels. Let us now glance at those most stupendous miracles which are frequently disputed because of their transcendent marvelousness, the raising of Lazarus, and the resuscitation of the apparently dead bodies of several other persons. Surely, if more could be accomplished with than without agencies inferior to spirit, material remedies would have been called in to assist in raising the dead; but when the greatest works are to be performed we hear of no external means being employed beyond the use of

such a simple, though all-expressive formula, as "Lazarus, come forth," or "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise." No eye salve and no water can raise the dead, but the apparently lifeless form already given over to the tomb can be restored to perfect health and vigor by the omnipotent power of God made manifest, which is the divine life working through human agency. Jesus working on this basis did not claim to hold that miraculous position distinct from all the rest of humanity which orthodox Christendom has assigned to him, for had he put forth the claim that his works were performed by reason of his own godhead, which no disciple could possibly share, he would not have commissioned his followers to do the very works that he did, and also have prophesied that they should perform even greater works after he had become invisible to the world.

Regular physicians holding pews in Christian churches, claiming to be disciples of Christ, declare that certain diseases are incurable; by uttering such a blasphemy they falsify the very gospel which they themselves pronounce the word of God. With one breath they call Jesus God, with the next they say that he was either deceived or a liar, for he affirmed that his disciples should heal all manners of sickness and diseases. Then if all manner of sickness and diseases are to be healed by Christian disciples, according to gospel evidence there can be no incurable disorder, for it makes Jesus a fool to declare that he prophesied that his disciples should work an impossibility. It is sciolism that affirms diseases to be incurable and that builds hospitals for incurables, thereby creating incurability by convincing the minds of sufferers and the public at large that certain disorders can never be overcome; this assertion of sciolistic ignorance is emphatically denied by true science, which affirms unequivocally **THERE ARE NO INCURABLE DISORDERS**; at the same time it is not scientific to say that in their present condition of ignorance those who are victims of the false beliefs entertained and incul-

cated in medical colleges can cure all manner of disorders. They (the physicians) must first heal themselves or be healed by those who are in the knowledge of truth before they can heal others. We do not mean that their bodily ailments alone must be removed, but their minds must be redeemed from the poisonous and destructive error which dares to assert that the ignorance of the schools is the standard whereby we must measure the power of spirit. Shakespeare was a wise man. In one instance at least we shall do well to follow his advice, though in the spirit only, for it would be too cruel to dogs to follow it in the letter. He counsels us to throw physic to the dogs. Such a course may be recommended to those who are afflicted with the hydrophobia scare and in their fanaticism wish to exterminate the canine species, for if the poor dogs have much ordinary physic thrown to them they will not long survive the effects unless their superior wisdom prevents their defiling their tongues with it. When the remonstrants were heard at the Boston State House against the bill put forward by the regulars to enslave the public, one of their strongest arguments against medical monopoly was based upon the testimony of several noted physicians that the less medicine people took the more healthy they were, one eminent authority being responsible for the assertion that the human race would be much healthier than it is at the present moment if there had never been either physicians or physic. Can any observer shut his eyes to the fact that sickness increases, diseases multiply and become more virulent, wherever so called-medical science assumes the greatest control? Whatever makes people think of disease, whatever turns their attention to it in any way, except to deny and vanquish it, tends to create it. The true metaphysician when treating a patient always directs his mind away from his ailments; he must be induced to look away from them entirely and his mind become active in a direction tending to health. Wherever thought is unduly concentrated there inflammation sets in; to direct the

thought away from the afflicted part is to remove the influence which creates abnormal excitation in that special quarter. Metaphysical science is not mesmerism, nevertheless mesmeric influence is included in metaphysical practice in so far as mesmeric action may be only a name given to an honest desire to benefit a sufferer by mental methods ; but unfortunately for mesmerism, personal will, selfishness, ambition, and often the most impure desires, have actuated the mesmeriser in the employment of his art ; therefore much of mesmerism stands for malpractice, always in so far as one mind seeks to dominate another for the sake of dominion mesmerism and malpractice are one. Metaphysicians are not magnetists, though animal magnetism is undoubtedly conveyed from one person to another when metaphysical treatments are being given, but magnetizing has its dangers ; magnetizers themselves claiming that it is their bodily emanation which they impart ; then if it be this, disease as well as health can be communicated by it. Lower forms of mind cure are not safe. They are often magical and partake of the nature of sorcery, which is the wielding of an undue influence over another's mind.

The true science of healing works to liberate, never to enslave the mind which it treats. "Loose him and let him go" is the word of truth, "thy faith hath made thee whole," is the formula of genuine spiritual science. We must now very briefly, ere we close, enquire into the nature of saving and healing faith, so that we may not misunderstand a frequently misused term. Faith is the result of conviction ; the power that arouses faith is the power that awakens the soul ; faith is a response to a spiritual energy that has awakened it. Therefore to create true faith in a patient is simply to arouse the divine element in him which when in activity accomplishes his salvation. Faith therefore is not credulity ; it is the farthest thing possible from gullibility ; it is the result of spiritual certainty and can only be induced by the power of truth. Why did the poor woman who

touched the hem of the garment of Jesus believe that he could make her whole? why did the centurion exhibit similar confidence, but because both these persons and many others mentioned in the gospel had already heard of the fame and felt the power of him in whom they instinctively trusted? The true healer will always inspire confidence, will always create faith even in the sceptic; "virtue" will go out from him, the sunlight of his soul will melt the iceberg of unbelief; demonstrations will inevitably follow convincing to the world, or at least to the sane portion of it which is willing to be convinced that spiritual gifts and divine powers are living realities in these modern days. The only absolutely necessary qualifications for true healers are supreme devotion to the good of humanity, perfect confidence in the omnipotence of good, and a certainty of the unreality of evil, coupled with a sufficient understanding of truth to protect one from falling a victim to open or insidious error. The way is open to all: all who earnestly desire to bless their fellow creatures, and can repose their trust implicitly in supreme goodness which is eternal life, are qualified to heal and bound to succeed in their endeavors, for such a frame of mind allying them with eternal strength unites them with all beneficent powers in the universe, and causes them to become willing and effective instruments in the hands of the only power that can put discord to route and establish a reign of harmony on earth and in man.

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM; 1⁰

Its Teachings Concerning Spirit-Life Compared with those of Spiritualism.

IN a single discourse on Esoteric Buddhism we can do no more than attempt to give a brief outline of the claims now being constantly made for occultism, or theosophy, by its leading literary representatives. To-day we shall turn our attention particularly to the Buddhistic beliefs concerning life beyond the grave, which are now the leading topics of consideration in many cultured circles in this country and abroad. We request our hearers. bear in mind that the simple statement of historic facts does not by any means imply that they who call your attention to such facts indorse them as truth. At the same time no well-informed person can refuse to admit the possibility of there being a vast deal more of truth in the formularies and text-books of the archaic religions than either Christian, Jew or Infidel is disposed to admit; while many Spiritualists are so terribly afraid of everything ancient, that the very antiquity of certain beliefs, and even knowledge, bars the door through which such intelligence might otherwise enter and enrich their minds.

The petition, Give us this day our daily bread, is a matchless supplication for the necessities of being. We cannot live on the food of yesterday; at the same time no one but an idiot would suppose that people went hungry until the time when they required sustenance. If spiritual food is imperatively demanded to supply the actual wants of humanity to-day, ancient races surely were provided with similar demands, and needed similar supplies to meet such demands. Human nature is pretty

much the same the world over. History well-nigh repeats itself ; with slight variations the music of life on earth is played over and over again in the same octaves ; the same keys are pressed again and again on the keyboard of existence, though by countless millions of fingers in succession, while every hand must play through the same scales and exercises, until ready by diligent application to study and experience, crowned at length by success, to take up new and grander strains, and produce harmonies unknown to the men of old. Progress, as we have often told you, is accomplished by means of circular revolutions. The outward movements of the earth diurnally upon its axis, and annually around the sun, are typical and illustrative of the progress of life throughout the ages. Winter follows harvest, night follows day ; one part of the earth is in summer while another is in winter. Whenever it is light in the northern zone it is dark in the southern, while only at the equator is it always equal ; there the sun always rises at six and sets at six. Nowhere else can there be aught but change, and the further we get from the centre the more marked are the changes, the wider are the differences, the greater the extremes.

Upon the earth there are always some souls whose embodiments enable them to dwell much nearer the centre of gravity, spiritually speaking, than others. There are always certain fraternities of souls who are embodied here with a view to the fulfilment of certain missions. These are they through whom the light of the spirit shines most conspicuously. The earth is never without them ; there are always some special witnesses for truth, even in the darkest night of ignorance, spiritual darkness and immorality. These witnesses have, many of them, been despised throughout their entire earthly career, and worshipped with divine honors after their passage hence. Others have met with some recognition even upon earth ; some have fought for truth even to the ending of their days upon the scaffold, the rack or gibbet.

Some have dwelt in solitudes apart; others, resorted to by kings and nobles, pronounced oracles or mouthpieces of heaven. That some have been unfaithful to their exalted mission is sadly true, while others have been so noble and self-forgetting that the worship paid to them in spirit, and the veneration shown their memories, have been but royal tributes offered by loving hearts to the elder brethren of the race.

At the head of these saintly ones in Oriental story stands Gautama, the hero of Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia." With some of the leading incidents in the life of this admirable Indian prince you are doubtless all familiar. You know how he was born to wear the purple, and yet was so touched even when a child with the sufferings of the poor that thronged the country and his father's palace, that he could neither eat nor sleep for long periods, his mind being so occupied with their distress. "Why should I be rich and happy," said this brave and feeling child, "while others die of leprosy and hunger? Let me share their griefs, let me abandon all the glories and luxuries of a court, to throw myself, heart and soul, into any enterprise which can possibly be devised for their relief;" and so, when still a youth, though married to a charming princess, he leaves his father's palace and goes out into the night, to cast in his lot with the poor and desolate, the sick and the infirm. The smaller circle of family affection seems all too narrow for this brave, impulsive, most unselfish boy; and though his conduct in leaving his young wife and all bound to him by ties of blood and affection is open to criticism, no reader can question his motive for so doing. Rash he may have been, but sincere and tender-hearted he was also, and that to an extent impossible to overestimate. He had everything to lose and nothing to gain by taking the step he took. Hunger, cold, nakedness, all he risked; with diseases and horrors of every kind his new life must render him familiar, for did he not fly in the night of his

"great renunciation" from every comfort, luxury, and joy, to face alone the world's distress, to share poverty with the poorest, and suffering with the saddest and most degraded, that through him sadness and disease, poverty and shame, might be converted into their opposites?

His father sought for him, and found him not. Search was made diligently everywhere, but no traces could any discover of the prince who had so mysteriously left the palace in the dead of night. He has joined the mendicant friars, of whom there were multitudes all over India. Their most rigid asceticisms are welcome, most welcome to this youth who has been nurtured in luxury, wealth and ease. He thinks not of himself, but only of the poor, the sick, the despised, the wretched. He must crucify self that others may live; this noble thought impels him forward; he overcomes a thousand obstacles, runs into dangers without number, but from every trial comes forth unscathed. His healing power is wonderful; his spiritual sight is matchless. He earns for others what no gold can ever purchase, peace of mind and joy of heart, which are the only absolute medicines, the only perfect cure-alls in the pharmacopœia of nature. But even in his new life he is not perfectly at ease, something yet is lacking, when at length new light breaks in upon his seeking soul as he meditates beneath the sacred tree, and an angel, who appears to him, points out a yet more excellent way. He withdraws from the fraternity of friars, and henceforth devotes himself assiduously and alone to meditation upon divine truths; never relinquishing his love for humanity, never letting an opportunity pass unimproved of benefiting his kind, till by complete purity of thought, word and deed he at length attains to Nirvana's perfect blessedness, which we have often told you does not by any means signify annihilation or anything approaching to it, but, on the contrary, involves a perfect individualization of every separate globule in the boundless ocean of universal life.

It will be our duty at this time to endeavor to explain in simple western language the highly mystical system of Asia, and to show you, if possible, how perfectly in accord with each other are all the gospels of the world on the subject of human immortality, the nature and processes of development beyond the grave, and the necessary sequences of sin and sorrow. Sin is not of necessity more than an infirmity. Infirmities are not immortal, and therefore means are provided for their ultimate extinction. These methods are often called punishments; in reality they are remedial penalties, and form a necessary part of the discipline of the human soul. In a previous lecture on the "Philosophy of Spirit," * we have, to some extent, expounded the nature of the soul, and the dependence of mind and spirit upon the soul. The soul was called by Hindus *atma*, which term means what divine soul meant to the Grecian philosophers, the innermost principle of all, the breath of the eternal in man, the *living soul* mentioned in Genesis. The spirit is a primary offshoot from this inmost principle, the mind being more external, while the spiritual or astral body, and the vital cord connecting the spiritual with the material body, are necessarily far more nearly related to the material envelope. The astral body or shell, as it is sometimes called by Theosophists, is of course not immortal, any more than the physical body is immortal; as it is built up of force in the spirit-world as the earthly body is composed of material substances, and is subject to perpetual change. Nothing but mutability can be predicated upon a shifting basis, and as mind and body are alike subject to change, it is the soul only which is immortal.

The Oriental philosophy which we are now discussing appears in modern theosophy only as a faint and glimmering ray of the brightness which once shone with such

* "The Philosophy of Spirit and its Embodiment." Price, 5 cents. Can be obtained of W. J. Colville, or Messrs. Colby & Rich, 9 Bosworth St., Boston.

resplendent fervor over the entire Orient. All interpretations of Sanskrit now attempted are apt to be faulty, from the simple fact that all the records of the East have so profound an interior meaning, that one may be a highly gifted linguist, and have a perfect knowledge even of those ancient and difficult tongues in which the Vedas and Puranas were originally written, still, as one might be able to translate the Hebrew prophecies or Christian gospels literally out of one language into another, with perfect accuracy, a far different line of knowledge would be necessary to give the translator a clue to any spiritual sense in which they may be profitably understood. Mr. Sinnett, in his "Occult World" and "Esoteric Buddhism," has been a faithful disciple of his Eastern teachers, and far more, perhaps, than he perceives has been employed by spirits as their amanuensis, they having used him to explain many dark passages which, without the light of inspiration, would have remained hopelessly obscure. It may truly be said that no one but the author can rightly interpret his own book, because no one but he knows absolutely what the words were intended to convey; but for many books it would be difficult to find the author. We know many authors who are almost entirely dependent on inspiration; let them write novels, so-called, and they are histories, biographies and parables. Like the poet Milton, they can write only when the "fit" takes them. The fire kindled by the Muses will only burn when the Muses fan the flame. Many poets, essayists and novelists build wiser than they know; they are little more than passive instruments, whose hands are made to write, and whose brains become receptive to the influx of external thoughts. Thus genius is often nine-tenths mediumship; only very rarely do we find a man of genius who can at any and every time and upon all occasions speak out his best thoughts or write his finest verses.

The loss of personality, looked upon by many as so

great a catastrophe, according to the most enlightened Oriental conception, signified only the blending of the spheres of various souls in such perfect harmony that the orchestration of the celestial performers produced only a perfectly harmonious and completed volume of tone. No instrument and no performer loses his identity by playing in a perfectly trained band or singing in a chorus in which no voice is heard distinctly from others. The highest development of mediumship implies concerted action on the part of mortal and immortal. Where there is friction or arbitrary control the wheels are not well oiled, the machinery does not work smoothly; and where the highest adept differs from the lowest spirit-medium is only where harmony differs from discord and perfect blending from unpleasant contention.

Theosophical surmises concerning the future life, and agnostic declarations made by occultists concerning phenomena, are often puerile and almost worthless; but because of this no one should stand ready to deny that there are, or at least may be, those who have studied, developed and practiced in the East, who are equally far removed from charlatanism and fanaticism. India possesses a religion of measureless antiquity, and gives ample evidence to the student that the supremest attainments of man were at one time perfected into outward form on the banks of the Ganges. India and Egypt are almost equally venerable, and for a long time their histories ran in parallel lines. In the remote past the African and the Asiatic races had developed simultaneously a peculiar people, whose culture in spiritual and scientific directions was equally remarkable. Such a period evidently antedated the biblical deluge, the deluge itself referring to a period when the seats of learning in the East were overthrown, while inspiration waned through an excess of sensuality. The true adept was always, and always must be, a pure and upright person. Magic and wickedness may coalesce, but communion with such spheres of intel-

ligence as can inspire to the delivery to the world of such teachings as are to be found in the Vedas is only possible where aspirations are truly ennobling.

Those who have devoted whole lifetimes to the study of spiritual things have at length come so thoroughly into union with the dwellers in the spirit-world that they have, in many instances, spent the greater part of their time in converse with those who are no longer robed in flesh; while they have also so disciplined their own bodies as to leave and enter them at will, thereby acquiring facilities for perambulating space and gathering up information impossible to be acquired by those whose energies are centred upon material things. It certainly would not do for the majority of mankind to devote themselves thus entirely to the interior life, but if some can be spared from ordinary vocations to devote themselves exclusively to some science or philosophy, the world can well afford out of its teeming multitudes to spare one here and there for the life of a spiritual recluse. As we listen to the words of specialists on every other subject and pay them deference, we can surely give some measure of attention to those self-denying and spiritualized Mahatmas who, amid Himalayan fastnesses and in the delightful valleys between those heights, have from age to age perpetuated spiritual orders in which are spiritual and masonic truths that, unfortunately, the majority of modern Masons would only scoff at.

It has been repeatedly asserted by lecturers and others that the Hindus believed in fourteen spirit spheres, seven below the earth and six above it, the earth itself being one. The nether spheres are states of darkness when compared with the earth, while the earth-sphere is the abode of countless myriads of spirits who have left the material body with no heavenward aspirations; while the six ascending spheres are occupied by spirits who are gradually advancing toward the spheres of celestial light or universal heavens. The numeral seven has always

been employed in cabalistic documents as the symbol of perfection ; hence the Oriental doctrine not only of seven spheres, but also of the seven-fold nature of man, is in no sense extraordinary, and should not create surprise or bewilderment. When Gerald Massey was lecturing in London in 1883, he spoke of this seven-fold nature as an Oriental and very ancient conception, and when in America he was ignorantly criticised in a New York paper, and was made to say that man has seven souls, only one of which is really worth preserving. False and misleading as so garbled a statement must necessarily be, there is more truth in it than at first sight appears to the cursory reader, the seven-fold nature of man being capable of analysis, intelligible and *easily* comprehensible presentation. In Proverbs IX. the words "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars," refer no doubt to the human soul and its tabernacle, as the development of man is the highest expression of wisdom possible on earth.

What are the seven principles of which man is constructed ? Mr. Sinnet, in "Esoteric Buddhism," informs us, and in so doing he only states a very ancient truth by no means unfamiliar to every sincere student of ancient mystic literature. Taking a view of the scale proceeding downward or outward from the centre to circumference, the principles appear as follows :

1st. The *atma*, or divine soul, which is the alpha and omega of conscious being, immortal and indestructible ; that which is our essential *ego*, or real, imperishable self.

2d. The human spirit considered as a primary emanation from the soul. This is called in Mr. Sinnet's work *Buddhi* or spiritual soul. When this, the second highest principle, is developed, man may be said to have attained to the sixth sphere in spiritual development. Exceptional men only display this divine life on earth, which is second only to the attainment of the seventh degree, where the *atma*, or divine soul, is expressed, which is only

the case with those who have graduated to celestial life. The remaining five principles are necessary to constitute a perfect man as distinguished from an animal, while the two highest mentioned already are only discernible in exceptionally developed persons. These five principles are the Human Soul, *Manas*; Animal Soul, *Kama Rupa*; Astral Body, *Linga Sharira*; Vitality, *Prana*; and the body, *Rupa*.

These seven principles are all emanations from the soul germ itself, and are simply differentiated modes of spiritual manifestation. According to the Buddhistic theory, water is only *Maya*, which means delusion; while *Brahma* (spirit) is alone accredited with life. Thus Mrs. Eddy, and other Christian Scientists now in Boston, will find, by carefully perusing the records of India, that their doctrines, in a slightly different form, have been promulgated for thousands of years in the far Orient, and though far from agreeing with them in all their claims and pretensions, we are perfectly at one with them on the primary assumption that spirit is the basis of all things, and that life and spirit are synonymous terms. Take the life out of the tree, and all the leaves and branches remain, but instead of unfolding they decline, wither and die. Even the rocks, the elements of which were once instinct with life, are not able to resist the slow ravages of decay. Even the hills are not everlasting; even the most solid marble formed in carboniferous quarries from the decay of vegetable and animal life, is not immortal, and ever where life is not, there can be no growth or progress, and where progress is not, stagnation is simply apparent.

Nature is never neutral; either she is building or destroying, and just so soon as the tidal wave of spirit which set out in its flow toward certain expressions changes its course and recedes, matter, which is a vibration of or emanation from spirit, commences to dissolve. Matter feels nothing; there are no sensations in matter; it is

the spirit alone which feels, and this spirit is not independent or self-existent except in its primal and ultimate condition, *viz.*, that of the soul-units; the unit of life is your inmost self. Some there are who have no conception of spiritual life and no desire to live hereafter. These display nothing of their immortal nature; the soul itself in such cases has never broken through the external shell, and has therefore given you no sign of its presence. When such persons pass into the spirit-life they retain nothing of their earthly individuality; they are dead to all spiritual things, and can only display again their earthly characteristics by employing the physical magnetism of some one on the earth. These spirits who are so intimately connected with the earth can and do produce physical manifestations; but very little intelligence is displayed through any of their work. No one recognizes them, and they are often spoken of as elementaries, while the elementary spirits proper are not necessarily any other than animal spirits, and the transcient, fleeting individualities of forms which survive in astral body longer than in material form.

With the physical body you are all acquainted, though there are many things to be known about it not yet revealed. However, we may safely and justly leave it to the student of the physical side of nature to explain to us the mechanism of the lowest point in man's being that comes within the range of the anatomist. The scalpel and dissecting knife have their place in dealing with its intricacies, while physiology and hygiene undertake to prescribe for its many wants; but ascending the scale from the body to the divine soul, at the very second step of our way we encounter another principle, which all scientists affirm must have an existence, but which they declare oftentimes proceeds from the body, is the result of molecular action, and is generated by heat, light and electricity. We, on the other hand, maintain that vitality created the body, instead of the body generating or

producing vitality. Vitality, or the vital principle, is described in Allan Kardec's works as a fluidic chord connecting the mortal with the immortal parts of man. It is the cord mentioned in Ecclesiastes, which if broken ruptures life. This cord is the outermost emanation of the spiritual nature, and the direct agent in producing matter.

Electricity is said by many to be the basis of life, but electricity is beyond analysis, it is strictly invisible, and is simply universal force in a particular mode of motion. Motion is essential to life, but motion is inseparable from vitality, while vitality itself is the chain which binds the material to the astral or spiritual body. At death, vitality no longer flows from the inner or astral to the outer or material body; and thus at the time of dissolution clairvoyants have often seen the spiritual body rise out of the material. This astral body possesses no persistent individuality, it changes constantly, it is a fleeting aggregation of particles gathered up from the kingdom of force as the physical body is built up from the kingdom of matter. It resembles the physical body very closely at time of death, and is composed of force, or, as Swedenborg's writings tell us, of spiritual substance, this substance being far finer, subtler, and more enduring than material substance. The idea of the substantiality or objectivity of this astral or spiritual body, though in itself largely true, has given rise to many erroneous suppositions; among them the one that children who have passed from earth in infancy will appear so forever in the spiritual state, while the exact reverse is the truth.

The astral body when seen as it really is appears beautiful or hideous in proportion as the life of the person who has developed it and wears it has been beautiful or the reverse. Many a handsome prince who was a tyrant; many a queen, decked in jewels, and beautiful as the most exaggerated representations of Cleopatra; many a man renowned for the strength of a Hercules and the

beauty of an Apollo, has gone out into the spirit-world frightful to behold. The old mythologies and the ancient superstitions relative to transmigration are all founded on the visions of the seers. In Greece *metempsychosis* included a belief in the possibility of one who had already lived a human life on earth descending into an animal form in a future existence for purposes of purification and expiation. This doctrine we do not endorse, as no spirit can ever require experience in an animal form who has once inhabited a human body, and indeed, from our point of observation, we cannot conceive of a spirit, having once in its entrance upon a material career produced a human form through which to express itself, losing the ability to produce the form of humanity should it again require to embody itself on earth.

The visions of the seers have doubtless revealed to the Orient, what is now being clearly revealed to many in this land and elsewhere who possess clairvoyance and the gift of discerning spirits, *vis.*, that the vesture and environment of the spirit are always typical of the spirit's condition. Thus if attributes which are most naturally expressed in the form of a hyena, a bear, a serpent, a lamb, a bird, a tree, a flower or any other familiar object in the material world, are in the ascendant in the inner life of a spirit departed from earth, on entering the spirit-spheres such forms accompany the spirit, and often so completely surround and engulf the spirit-body proper, that only these integuments and appurtenances are visible to the seer. Of course it is not true that these forms are created through the death of the material body; they are within the natural structure during earthly life, whensoever they preponderate in character. Thus a spirit need not be disembodied to have such appearances frequenting him. It is by reason of this that many seers are repelled from certain people who are outwardly beautiful, while they are irresistibly drawn to others whose outward appearance is at least uninteresting. When seership is

more thoroughly understood than at present, we may be treated to a solution of the problems of elementary and animal forms in spirit accompanying mortals, which will in no way invalidate clairvoyant testimony, while at the same time it will make clear many things which are now obscure.

Elementary spirits enter very largely into the philosophy of the Theosophist, and it is well known to all who have really investigated the occult sciences that depraved human spirits, and also sub-human intelligences, obey the will of strong-minded persons, who are simply black magicians and under the control of those who are their masters. These inferior spirits work out the designs of their superiors, just as weak-willed people and animals on earth obey perforce, and sometimes willingly, one whose will is more developed than their own, and diametrically opposite statements are made concerning the power, work and influence of elementary spirits by occultists. It is universally conceded, among Hindus who are acquainted with the esoteric side of Hindu marvels, that adepts, fakirs and others have inferior spirits under their control. These inferior spirits are both human and sub-human; but the adept is always the master, so they are not supposed to control his organism, but he, by virtue of superior power, commands them to do his bidding. Again, it is stated that people are made to do foolish, mischievous and wicked things by elementaries. This is impossible unless the individual who eventually becomes the dupe of the powers of darkness has so encouraged his lower propensities and abused his power for shameful ends that he has become the creature of lower impulses, the easy prey of unbridled lust; but even when in such a condition elementaries have no power of their own. They are, however, the emissaries of those under whose direction they work, there always being human intelligence among either embodied or disembodied, wherever a human being succumbs to an outside influence.

Cabalistically considered, elementary spirits correspond to the four great divisions of human faculties: Gnomes, or spirits of earth, being earthly desires; Sylphs, or spirits of air, reasoning faculties; Undines, or spirits of water, imaginations; and Salamanders, or spirits of fire, spiritual aspirations. These four orders of faculties are essential to the completion of a human being. The fleshly desires must be dominated by reason; imagination as a mirror or reflector must stand between reason and the soul, and act as medium of communication between the spiritual nature and the intellect. Imagination, therefore, has a work and place assigned to it as mediator between the rational and intuitive elements of man's being. It is entirely out of place when it acts as a substitute for reason, as it is intended to be an advance guard going on before to catch glimpses of what is ahead. When it has discovered or thinks it has discovered a fresh reality, then reason must step in to probe, analyze and verify. The imaginations of the poets have frequently been foregleams of the achievements of reason and sense. The spirit is always in advance of the intellect, and when imagination is cultured and exercised discreetly, instead of being a will-o'-the-wisp, leading those who follow it into all manner of snares and absurdities, it will be a pearly gateway through which the golden city of celestial wisdom can be entered, till at length reason will be adequate to the task of explaining celestial life, and all parts of human nature, acting in perfect concert, will be truly one.

We must now in closing say a very few words upon the Esoteric Buddhist's ideas on spirit-communion. These are often very vague and shadowy; astral bodies and shells often receive credit for all that takes place at a spiritual séance, while the company there are convinced they are receiving tidings from their human spirit-friends. No one who has ever considered materialization philosophically imagines for a moment that the evanescent form

rapidly built up in a circle-room, and as rapidly dissolved, is a spirit-body ; it is simply an appearance, a phantasm ; but it cannot be produced unless there is human spiritual power to produce it. No elementary or animal spirit can possibly produce the human form, or any semblance or counterfeit of it. Human intelligence is always present when human forms appear, but these forms are often imperfect, owing to imperfect conditions for their development and imperfect knowledge on the part of the spirits who wish to appear to you through these semblances of what they once were.

The spirit-body, as seen in spirit-life, registers the present condition of its occupants ; while the forms shown at a séance often would be unknown to you who are dependent on sensuous evidence if they did not assume an appearance with which you were once familiar on earth. If the same spirit desired to show himself to four different people, each one of whom had known him at some stage in his earthly life when the others were not acquainted with him, he would endeavor to make four distinct appearances, that each of his acquaintances might know that it was he because of the form reminding them of him as he was when they knew him. If one had not seen him since he was a little boy he would try and show himself as a child ; if another had known him as a young man he might endeavor to reproduce his appearance in early manhood ; if another had not met him till he was between forty and fifty, when he came to that friend he would try to appear as he did in middle life, and if the fourth had seen him an old man, ready to pass into the other life from sheer old age, he would try to appear to that friend as he looked in the last act of his earthly career. The little boy, the young man, the middle-aged and the old man are all one, they are four aspects of the same being ; and when physical proof of spirit presence is demanded you all know how very far from conclusive that proof is considered by many investigators unless it appeals completely to the senses.

Materialization, and every other form of physical phenomena, is only a stepping-stone to the time when spiritualized humanity will rejoice more in the development of spiritual discernment than in any external tests. There are many to-day in whom this inward power to recognize spirits by spiritual means is developing, and very often when manifestations are uncertain and unsatisfactory to external observers, some one or more in the company will express such deep joy, and such unbounded satisfaction with what has occurred, that those who cannot experience spiritual communion when spirits appeal to the spiritual senses and touch the emotions of the heart, laugh at him, and call him crazy or deluded, while he is just as sure that he has held communion with a beloved one in spirit-life as he is of his own existence. Let no one rob you of your simple, earnest, soul-satisfying faith in what has demonstrated itself to you as a spiritual reality. If we are to be free to accept truth as it appeals to our own minds and hearts, we must forever discountenance the carping, conniving methods so often resorted to by the opponents of mediums and mediumship. If you choose to leave the physical aspects of a subject to physical scientists ; if you think it wise to employ learned ignorance in the shape of psychical research societies to do your investigating for you, instead of using your own powers of observation, the new papacy and the new priesthood may possibly, in the course of ages, determine something with regard to the nature of the force which operates in the production of spirit phenomena ; but if in an hour of trial or bereavement you receive enlightenment, consolation, hope, courage, relief from a spirit communication, it matters little to you whether "*authorities*" have pronounced a favorable or unfavorable verdict upon the medium through whom you receive what you are most in need of. While doctors dispute over a disease and its treatment, patients die ; but if one who is an "irregular" steps in, and by faith, prayer, metaphysics, or any other

agency, accomplishes a patient's restoration to health, the boon is not less valuable to the one rescued from suffering, because the means employed are not sanctioned by colleges and the physicians furnished with diplomas.

We read of a blind man who was thoroughly at sea as to what opinion ought to be formed of the healer who had opened his eyes. He professed to understand nothing of the character or work of Jesus ; but one thing he knew, and that was he had been cured through the instrumentality of some agency powerful enough to give him sight. The blessing of sight was none the less because mystery or ignorance veiled from him and those about him the source whence the healing virtue came. So to-day, if in sorrow or darkness light is shed, you may not know by what means the light has reached you, but if the light is there and you are restored and uplifted by it, that is enough. We would give more for one practically useful result than for millions of statements and arguments ; the results must bear our dispassionate testimony to the good accomplished by spirit-communion ; and if on the tree of Esoteric Buddhism, or any other branch of Oriental Theosophy, good fruits are seen to hang ; if, when they are partaken of by those who gather them, they assist in producing healthy and happy states of mind, they have proved their goodness ; but if they merely cause the mind to wander off into the mazy wilderness of interminable and profitless speculation, if they unhinge convictions whose every influence over life is elevating ; if they develop superlative mysticism, but are devoid of practical utility, then do they show themselves to be the very phantasmagoria against which the Theosophists are so constantly warning the Spiritualists.

The translation of Sanskrit, the interpretation of Vedas, the resuscitation of old ideas and cabalistic phraseology, is far more practical in India than here. The Sanskrit documents are as powerful and authoritative among the Hindus as the Law and Prophets among the Jews, and the

New Testament among Christians. We heartily sympathize with native colleges in India for the education of Hindu youth, yet we do not see the need of introducing Buddhism into England or America ; but then we see no use in introducing Christianity into Africa. No good end is served by dressing up truth in such thick raiment that its form is hidden from all but initiates. At the same time Esoteric Buddhism and Esoteric Christianity have brought to light much valuable truth, and are setting people to thinking ; but the unveiling of Isis before the work is complete will need a removal of all disguises and secrecy. The Sphinx may be in a fearful rage when she is driven to desperation and destroy herself, but as a Sphinx is a mystery, an unsolved riddle, the advancement of mankind must inevitably, sooner or later, accomplish her destruction.

Modern Spiritualism is good news for ALL people. Its inculcations differ from those of all ancient systems, because the time is now ripening for the universal disclosure of what was formerly known and knowable only to the few. Denachan, Kama-Loa, and other Eastern terms mean no more than paradise, purgatory, and other words used to designate sections of the spirit-world and spiritual conditions by Europeans. The whole sum and substance of Esoteric Buddhism is that man must conquer self in order to rise to his true elevation as lord and master of the material universe. We must all feel humiliated as we witness the dominion which the beast has over man. Man, as sovereign over the three kingdoms of nature below him, must eventually have supreme power over every order of lower being. Snake-charming and lion-taming are perfectly natural ; man's will being superior to an animal's or reptile's, ought to be able to govern these lower creatures. Psychology explains all such marvels, but the adept's art is nothing which outward initiatory rites or acquaintance with theories can convey. There are many people whose faith in psychology is unfaltering, who have

literally no psychologic power themselves, while others who have never heard the word employ the power. We cannot develop the spiritual nature, or control the lower elements of nature, either in ourselves or others, without effort. Our power is the result of what we are, and of that alone. What we believe is of no consequence, except in so far as it changes us and makes us the possessors of power unattainable without certain knowledge.

The secret of adepthood is, after all, simply a secret very easy to state but very hard to win, and that is the attainment of a condition where everything in ourselves, corresponding to the lower life around us, is completely in subjection to our soul-life. To be an adept, one does not need to annihilate material desires, only to govern them completely. So far as the development of will is concerned, all that is really necessary is to do everything deliberately, with a motive, and never allow passion or persuasion to deter you from living up to high resolves. Strong motives, powerful will, resolute self-control, may be exercised by black magicians as well as by those who are of pure intent, but only can one attain to the heights of Nirvana and become one with Deity when every thought, motive and aspiration is of the purest. The pure in heart alone perceive divine truth and become its potent instruments.

MEDIUMS AND MEDIUMSHIP;

Or, Ancient and Modern Seership.

THE question of public professional mediumship is one which at the present time is engaging a great deal of popular attention, and as much has been said of late in print concerning business mediums and business mediumship, we have deemed it advisable to state our own views on this subject as clearly as possible, that those who desire to acquaint themselves with our attitude may be able to do so from our own utterances instead of from unreliable hearsay, and also to add our contribution to a controversy which becomes more and more interesting and important with every step that it proceeds.

It is needless to remind you that there are still a large number of people who persistently attack what is generally known as "business mediumship," on what they term both scriptural and moral grounds. Some of the more orthodox among religionists fly to the Bible, and from its pages gather an immense amount of ammunition with which they load their artillery and discharge it recklessly, though very confidently, into the enemy's camp, the enemy being the modern seer or clairvoyant, who, instead of occupying a position antagonistic to that filled by some of the most notable celebrities of Bible times, assumes a *rôle* identical with that taken by no less a personage than Samuel, who is over and over again styled a "man of God." Others, who are less conservative, and attach less importance to Biblical denunciations, contend against business mediumship because, say they, its influence in modern society is demoralizing. These latter,

many of whom are thoroughly sincere and conscientious in their belief, are in many instances more formidable opponents than those who go to the Jewish armory of ancient times for weapons with which to annihilate the clairvoyant profession, which includes a very large number of most worthy persons, though like all other professions there are some very black sheep within its fold.

Without assuming to speak for anybody but ourselves, and without putting forward our views as representative of any body or class of persons, we shall proceed to deal with the question of mediums and mediumship fearlessly from our own standpoint, introducing, by way of illustration, here and there, a few facts which have come within the range of our own experience bearing upon it.

Our first inquiry must be: What is mediumship, and what constitutes a person a medium? The word Medium is a Latin word which simply means a channel of communication; it is also used in the sense in which the word mediator is employed, signifying that which effects a union or reconciliation between objects or persons at variance or not otherwise accessible to each other. A pane of glass is a medium for light; an open window a medium for air. A medium is a revealer, an admitter, but not a creator. If you open your windows and doors on bright, clear, sunshiny days, a great deal of pure, wholesome light and air may stream in; if you open them on cold, foggy, rainy or windy days, the snow or mist or tempestuous gales may disturb your comfort; in many senses, therefore, a medium has nothing whatever to do with what is admitted through the medium as the channel.

There are, however, other and quite as real and important senses in which mediums do influence whatever passes through them, as in the case of panes of glass and their relation to light. The color of the glass imparts its own hue to the ray that streams through it. In a church with colored windows have you not often noticed how curious the complexions and garments of the people who

are sitting in a direct line with some brilliantly colored windows appear when the sun is shining in? Then, too, the cleanliness of a window has much to do with the amount of light admitted; its size is also a matter of consideration. Inanimate objects, like glass, are of course wholly irresponsible agents; they can be cleaned or soiled, though they neither sully nor cleanse themselves. But when we come to deal with human mediums we cannot allow that these are merely instruments; every human being has some degree of will or mental volition; every one has some strength of mind, some character, some choice or preference. No one is entirely the creature of external forces, and while one may not attempt to gauge the limit of another's responsibility, we know enough of the power of the individual mind and will, in our own case, to repudiate utterly the degrading assumption that it is ever right for human beings to consider themselves as mere spouts or vessels, in no way accountable for what they receive and retain, or for what is given through them.

One of the greatest problems in social ethics and political economy, is the extent to which people are free agents, and the degree to which they are influenced by their surroundings. We must all see clearly enough, unless we are totally blind, that the same people are very different under different circumstances, and that whatever may be the real extent of their individual responsibility, they are much safer and more pleasant to live with when the restraints of civilization, instead of the lawlessness of savage life, surround them. Mediums, those individuals usually so-called, are people of extreme sensitiveness or susceptibility; they are influenced by their surroundings to an extraordinary extent, and are, therefore, perhaps justly regarded as being somewhat less responsible than other people. This remark applies particularly to business and test mediums, those who are easily introduced into the personal sphere of their sitters. Most, if not all of these, are natural mesmeric or magnetic sensitives, and

wherever a professional mesmerist is exhibiting in public, and wishes to try experiments with members of the audience, he is glad to see a good percentage of these naturally negative people in the assembly. In many instances it is not necessary that the operator should set any will at all upon some of these subjects, he even may not have observed them; but the moment he begins to use his influence on some one else, they feel themselves irresistibly attracted to the platform, and involuntarily leave their seats and rush, to the amusement of the audience, often straight into the professor's arms. Now if one mind thus influences another while both are in the material body, what more likely than that these same sensitives should be often found yielding involuntarily to the action of disembodied spirits?

If this theory be a correct one, and we are sure its truth is substantiated by the widest range of human experience, we can at once see how utterly futile it is for persons to be always boasting that they have exposed the tricks of certain professional mediums. We do indeed sympathize with those who love the truth supremely, and as supremely dislike to see others imposed upon, and are of course equally unwilling to be cheated themselves; but have the methods of exposure, even granting the exposures themselves were genuine, been of a nature to enlist the sympathies of honest seekers after truth? The pettiness, the deceit, the acknowledged mendacity, added to the positive brutality practiced upon mediums by boastful and self-righteous persons, who have undertaken to show up fraud in spirit circles, has been simply disgusting in the eyes of all unprejudiced readers of the daily papers. The treachery, the low cunning, the malevolent spite constantly used, and then boasted of by persons whose zeal has turned to rancor, and whose pretended love of fair play has made them traitors themselves, has given the mediums the best possible opportunity for posing in the *rôle* of martyrs; and thus a reactionary

wave of feeling has set in, and the exposed medium has soon figured as the persecuted innocent who fell a victim to the designs of the unscrupulous. Now if all these "exposed" mediums are really honest, it is a good thing for them that their persecutors and traducers descend to the infamous practices of which they boast in public print; but if the mediums are guilty, they are simply being encouraged in their deception by being treated in so dastardly a manner that charitable outsiders, who know nothing of the case, are influenced by sentiments of common humanity to protest against the treatment they have received at the hands of pretended friends who were, in reality, but enemies in disguise.

Now what is more feasible than the declaration constantly affirmed by a very large and intelligent section of Spiritualists, both in this country and abroad, that wherever treachery lurks in the breasts of sitters, conditions are present for simulation of every kind. It really seems late in the day to review facts sustained years and years ago by mesmerism, but so little do many people know of the reality of mesmeric influence, that whenever the fact of psychological pressure is called in to explain the conduct of extremely sensitive persons, they at once accuse those who are merely desirous of investigating matters in a scientific spirit, of superlative credulity or willful complicity with fraud. The German scientists, as a body, are certainly not Spiritualists, and though Zöllner in his admirable work, "Transcendental Physics," endorses the genuineness of the mediumship of Dr. Slade, he cumbers his narration with an abstruse dissertation upon a probable fourth dimension of space, and occupies moreover an almost unique place among the professors of the Vaterland. Still the German physicists of the present day, non-spiritualistic though for the most part they are, are fair enough in many instances to take ground precisely similar to that taken by those enthusiastic Spiritualists made so much fun of by those who, whether professing

faith in Spiritualism or not, introduce brutality and deception into their methods of investigation.

During the past summer that very able London journal, *Light*, has published a deeply interesting, though decidedly skeptical series of articles, by Edward Von Hartmann, on Spiritualism. This able and candid gentleman has been endeavoring to explain away the spiritualistic hypothesis, and therefore is certainly the very opposite of those who have the reputation of recognizing their departed friends, not only in disguised mediums, but even in dressed-up broomsticks. Alluding to Baron Hellenbach, whose researches into the phenomena entitle him to great consideration, Herr Hartmann speaks of the Baron as an "incisive and self-possessed man of the world who might well be trusted to see through even astute conjuring, one, moreover, who is penetrated with a sense of the characteristic unreliability of mediums." Now this Baron Hellenbach goes so far in his willingness to comply with the prescribed conditions at a séance, that he even considers it unfair to "make more use of his five senses for taking cognizance of the phenomena than the mediums or apparitions permit." Herr Hartmann himself says: "Now I grant that it is disloyal to roughly clutch hold of a medium or apparition, because an alarming waking from the somnambule state may have injurious consequences; but I do not admit that it is unfair to supplement impressions of sight and hearing by judicious contact, or by smell."

Were it not for fear of wearying our auditors by too extended quotations, we should like to quote a very large part of Herr Hartmann's intelligent observations; but enough has been said to give our hearers a fair sample of the rational, considerate attitude assumed by our brethren across the water, who are engaged in what is now commonly known as psychical research. The German mind, at once skeptical and metaphysical, is, in its higher development, always scholarly and courteous. Trans-

cendentalism and idealism are more common in Germany than Spiritualism; but mesmerism and somnambulism are well-attested facts among educated Teutons. Professional and cultured minds can neither accept nor reject blindly, they can only reason and observe; and for purposes of calm and sensible investigation nothing is further from contributing to satisfactory results than a hasty and impetuous spirit. Psychical research societies are indeed needed, but we need not wait for great men to form them; we can form them ourselves, in our own parlors. We cannot believe simply what other people tell us; and in the present frenzied condition of many minds on the subject of Spiritualism, in our estimation, exposure and defenses, theatrically paraded before the public, one after the other, amount to very little to that public; they simply leave the matter where they found it. If any of you intend to take the initiative in organizing a movement for psychical research, we entreat you, ere you take a single step, never to act upon the proverb that "it takes a thief to catch a thief." Thieves, of all people, are the less able to detect dishonesty in others; they are so imbued with the atmosphere of dishonesty that it is a matter of impossibility for them to do so. In the moral world, one must never acclimate himself to any kind of intrigue if he wish to be in a condition to readily discriminate between truth and falsehood.

That some people are far more sensitive than others is a matter of every-day experience. Some are like heavy church organs, that require much effort to manipulate; others like Æolian harps that respond instantly to the slightest breeze. We find mediumistic persons in every walk of life. The easily tempted, the easily led, are all mediums, and if surrounded with pure and healthful influences, would soon become valuable instruments for the powers of light, though when exposed to the forces of darkness, they fall an easy prey to the vices of society. Many a young man is so sensitive to influences around

him that he cannot resist an invitation to a liquor saloon or gambling resort. He would never have gone to such places of his own free will ; he was enticed by others, and upon the enticers the burden of his sin assuredly rests. If we were conversing with such an one, we should endeavor to teach him to develop his own resisting power. Though we may almost despise a condition of abject submission to any and every extraneous influence, it is clearly our duty not to play upon the weaknesses of others and then kick them after we have occasioned their fall ; but rather, knowing their fatal susceptibility, use our power to strengthen their moral tone, and surround them with such influences that if they do yield blindly unto them it shall lead them to good and not to evil. Excessive sensitiveness is a weakness ; when it becomes morbid, it is a disease. Many sensitives are like anchorless and rudderless vessels : they drift hither and thither wherever the torrent carries them. If the wind blows them into smooth waters and safe harbors, they do well ; if a contrary gale drives them to the rocks, they are dashed in pieces. Let us endeavor to be auspicious breezes, blowing all such into calm waters and peaceful havens. At the same time let us strive with our might and will to provide them with rudder and anchor, so that when they must needs be exposed to storms, they will not be, as formerly, completely at the mercy of the waves.

There are, as you know, many phases of mediumship which are both developed and exercised in widely different ways. Having spoken, we are sure, with all due compassion and consideration for morbidly sensitive persons, we will now say a word in discouragement of that extremely neutral negation and passive state into which many desire to enter, in order to become mediums. Passivity is indeed necessary to the full exercise of mediumistic power, but we must first know who we are yielding to before we blindly place ourselves in his hands.

People often father upon very exalted spirits the diseased conditions of their own disordered brains. Being tired of work, and thinking they can live with much less effort by following mediumship as a profession than by continuing at a trade, they either biologize themselves or some sensitive till they receive the advice to throw up all business and depend for support upon mediumship. Employed as a means of livelihood, in their case, the mediumship is something yet to be developed, or at best it is only in its infancy. What is the usual result of following such foolish counsel? The person who obeys it becomes a mendicant, and the cause of Spiritualism is dishonored. To follow the advice of spirits, with one's eyes open, is a very different thing from following it with the eyes shut. To trust any stranger who accosts you in the street, and place all your business in his hands, would be an act of sheer madness; while to follow the sage counsel of a successful business man who had earned a claim upon your confidence by exhibiting before you ability superior to your own even, might be the highest wisdom. Your best judgment might advise you to entrust your affairs without reserve into the hands of one who had shown himself more competent to manage them than yourself. That is the attitude sustained by sensible mediums to sensible spirits; they have followed intuitions and impressions, and have not been led astray; their health has been improved, their mental capacities enlarged, and their moral nature unfolded by contact with superior minds. Thus they have tried the spirits and found them faithful.

Wise spirits advise, but never coerce; they respect the individuality of their mediums, and on no account allow them to become irresponsible mouthpieces or conduits. Who are the spirits, that they should assume undisputed tyranny over the minds of mortals? They are only disembodied human beings, many of whom have less, while others have far more light than is yet accorded to men

on earth. You will, every one of you, be spirits some day; indeed you are spirits now, and when you have shuffled off the mortal coil you will be yourselves, and no one else. As the tree falls, so will it lie. The fallen tree in Ecclesiastes is a singularly apposite illustration of the actual condition of the spirit when it quits the mortal frame. Not one remains forever in the place or condition where it fell; it commences a series of transformations in intellect, morals and experience, at the moment when the angel of transition summons it forth from its material environment.

Spiritualism cannot be intelligently investigated, its philosophy cannot possibly be accepted, without entirely revolutionizing both the Orthodox Christian and early Universalistic theories of the state of the spirit immediately after leaving the physical body. Many spirits do not leave the earth at all; they fill its atmosphere, they inhabit that space around you that seems void to your material perceptions. They are still mingling with the affairs of earth, and the most earth-bound or undeveloped of them are in the condition described by Swedenborg in some of his memorable relations recorded in the past century. They have not left the haunts of their earthly existence, and while out of the material body have not yet awakened to any real perception of spiritual existence. The darker and blinder the spirits, or the more dogmatic they are, the more coercive are their methods of control; the more unquestioning belief do they require of those over whom they obtain a victory. Those earth-bound spirits are by no means vicious in all cases, but they are blind and exceedingly dogmatic. They dread the light of reason and expect their dictum to be accepted without question. Many of these gain possession of sensitive people in precisely the way in which Orthodox religionists subdue the wills of their flocks. People are afraid to reason and investigators to inquire. They follow their leaders blindly, and esteem unquestioning obedience a

virtue. Fear enters very largely into such submission, and just as Orthodox people are afraid of displeasing the Almighty, if they dare to employ the reason he has given them in matters pertaining to religion, so the victims of these authoritative spirits dread to offend their controls. We dislike the word control; the word guide is quite unobjectionable. A controlling spirit is often a tyrant; a guiding spirit allows his instrument perfect freedom, and is obeyed from love and not from fear. John was right when he indited those exquisite words which occur in one of his epistles: "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment." No one can feel really comfortable when he is the slave of another's will. Freedom, not bondage, is the cry of the age. The age of liberty, not the age of subjection, has ever shone out before the vision of enraptured seers and poets as the golden age. Liberty, however, can only be attained as a result of intellectual and spiritual growth.

There must of necessity be a great discrepancy between different people's opinions of free will, as freedom is not to an equal extent the possession of all. Freedom grows with our growth. It is with our will as it is with our bodies: the growth of mind which immediately prostrates a child or weakling, is enjoyed by the healthy adult in the prime of life and vigor. The blast which uproots the tender sapling hardens the sturdy oak. So with all the subtle psychological influences which surround every one of us. Some people are so pitifully negative that they are utterly incapable of resistance when in the hands of powerful wills. Not only can the magician control inferior orders of spirits, animal and others, as is claimed by theosophists, he can also control human spirits who are lower than himself, just as those same spirits can control others who are lower than they. When this law is fully understood we shall understand precisely the position of the large percentage of business mediums who give such varying and flattering information to their clients, and whose predictions often fail, while at other

times their predictions are wonderfully fulfilled. Most of the business and test mediums in this city and elsewhere are very impressible. Women, many of them, are debilitated with the constant strain their mediumship imposes upon their systems. Many of them are widows or women with invalid husbands and children dependent upon them; many of them are generous and self-sacrificing even to a fault, and to suggest that these hard-working women should give their time and energy for nothing is a blasphemy against the divine spirit of justice which commands all to render a fair equivalent for whatsoever they receive.

Where many mediums grievously err is in not making plain their position, and letting the public know that they do not charge so much a line for the messages from spirits that are given through them, but for their time and strength, for the wear and tear of their belongings. How can they give their time to the public for nothing, when that time is their only means of obtaining a livelihood? They may sit for the poor for nothing whenever they like, but to allow successful business men and wealthy ladies to consume their time and strength for no compensation, is to establish an immoral precedent to encourage greed, avarice, and other selfish vices, which it is the mission of Spiritualism effectually to destroy. Freely ye have received, freely give, is a good motto, but we have yet to learn that people receive the necessities of life freely because they are mediums. Do the persons who demand that mediums shall give their time and strength to them for nothing, make provision at their establishments for those whom their niggardliness would reduce to penury and dependence? Where are the stores in Boston wherein mediums who receive no payment for their services can obtain food, fuel or clothing for nothing, provided they certify that they are mediums, and give sittings gratis? Where are the lodging and boarding houses where sittings are received in lieu of cash payment for room and board? Until such institutions exist, and

are kept up by the means furnished to them by those who would defraud mediums of their rightful earnings, we shall protest vigorously on every needed occasion against the false doctrines which are being inculcated by selfish individuals who, were they placed in the position occupied by the mediums they condemn, would be the very first to charge, and charge highly for their services, as such people invariably have a very high opinion of every service rendered by themselves. With those mediums, if there are any such, who fondle the wealthy and despise the poor, who deny their gift to honest seekers after truth who have no money to offer them, we have no sympathy; but the medium who will not sit for the wealthy merchant or jewel-bedizened dame without requiring compensation for her time and energy, is doing right, and ought to be supported in the exercise of that right by the entire community, spiritualistic and non-spiritualistic.

The objections which need to be raised against business mediumship affect business men, and strike home to the centres of injustice in commercial life far more than they touch mediums. That business is not conducted on strictly honest principles, that the Golden Rule is not obeyed in the market-place, is everywhere admitted. Go to Wall Street any morning; take your Bible in your hand and read from it passages endorsed by Jew and Gentile throughout the world; proclaim consistency a jewel, and demand that business, if only for a day, for experiment's sake, be conducted in accordance with the precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and who is there that would treat you as other than a fanatic? The Golden Rule is well enough in church and synagogue and temple; but in the market-place it is impractical. Business is treated as though its genius was the devil, while religion, a something entirely distinct from business, is proclaimed the spouse of heaven, the fair daughter of celestial regions.

Now the great need of the day is a religion that can

sanctify business ; that can break down the unnatural partition wall that has so long separated the sacred from the secular. Secular things must become sacred, for everything is sacred that has to do with life and its unfoldment. Busy brains and weary forms may need a periodic day of rest. Services in pleasant buildings, where music and oratory tend to lift the thoughts from the cares of the week, and direct the mind to spiritual objects, may be serviceable and blessed ; but there must be no more lax morals in the shop than in the temple, for God is everywhere ; all time and space are his ; and while at special times and in special places we may feel his influence with peculiar distinctness, the universal spirit is everywhere at all times, and we only fancy otherwise when clouds obscure our vision, and the fogs and smoke from the factories of earth rise up between us and the sight of our spiritual sun. The omniscience of Deity as a dogma has never been denied by any save atheists, but so little has it influenced human life in the main, that, though valuable as an article of faith, not having influenced daily conduct, it has become well-nigh a dead letter. Spiritualism, by revealing the proximity of individual human spirits, brings this great truth down to the feeblest comprehension. It causes us to know that unseen eyes are upon us, that unseen ones hear our thoughts, and that we are constantly attended by those who like our company and sympathize with our pursuits.

In the days of Samuel it was customary for the Israelites to employ clairvoyance as a means of discovering lost property, and the story of Saul being sent to seek his father's asses and going to a prophet or seer when he could not find them by mundane means, illustrates the rightful place which business mediumship held in Israel. Saul searched for the asses ; he did all he could to find them before he inquired of Samuel ; he used his own wits to the full, and only when they failed him did he seek higher advice than his own judgment could suggest. This is placing mediumship where it rightfully belongs.

Mediumistic power is, as it were, telescopic, microscopic and spectroscopic. It aids and supplements human ingenuity and vision. It does not do a substitutionary but only a supplementary work. We ought not to expect information from the spirit world as a substitute for our own sagacity, but when we are in doubt and difficulty then it is well for us to turn to a higher source of wisdom and reap such advantages as we may from holding converse with beings of a wider range of knowledge than our own.

Permit us to say a few words literally upon the search for asses. How many flippant people there are who would at once exclaim if any one suggested going to a clairvoyant, to say nothing of an illustrious prophet, to inquire about strayed asses, that he was endeavoring to lower the dignity of spirit-communion; that it was shocking to expect that good spirits would trouble themselves about such animals and their whereabouts; whereas we do not read that Samuel rebuked Saul and his attendants for making such inquiries, but, rather, that he furnished them with requisite information, told them the asses had returned or had been found; and now that the object of their visit was obtained, he would proclaim to Saul that he was commissioned to announce to him the most important event of his life, even his being called to occupy the throne of Israel. Thus Saul received tidings of a very different character than those he sought. He got a satisfactory answer about his father's animals, and then was revealed to him a most important event in his own career, one of such stupendous moment that it must have driven from his mind every thought of the matter about which he came to inquire.

Similar, though perhaps not quite so wonderful, are the results obtained to-day when legitimate business inquiries begin but do not end a séance. Supposing a marketman is dependent upon a donkey who draws the cart in which his provisions go to market, and he loses that donkey, and through having no means of conveying

his stock to market, himself and family are reduced to painful sufferings. Would it not be quite in accordance with the divine order that a wise and humane spirit should tell him how to recover the lost animal? Even asking about a strayed donkey is not asking an unworthy question; but should you covet your neighbor's and wish to appropriate it by unfair means, and go to a clairvoyant for directions in the art of purloining it successfully, your conduct would indeed be reprehensible, and your visit to the seer would be a curse both to yourself and the medium you visited. When a business man's intentions are honest, when his worldly affairs are in a tangle, and the spirit guides of a clairvoyant are appealed to to give such aid as they can toward straightening them out, we cannot see where the sin exists in employing business mediumship. Purify your business, make it sacred, conduct it on holy principles, do not divorce it from your religion, or your religion from it, and then the hue and cry against business mediums will be forever a thing of the past.

Sensitives are too often but mirrors, in which you see yourselves reflected; when you see how deformed you are in spirit you fly in a rage, and denounce the glass which reveals you to yourself. Fraud begets fraud; honesty begets honesty, and the only word of advice we have to give the public, if they do not wish to be deceived, is, Be pure in motive, indulge no unkind or unjust suspicions, lay no traps for others; at the same time use your reason, and never forget that spirits are fallible, while your own conscience must ever be the final court of appeal. We offer no comments upon séances we have not attended; we neither condemn nor endorse blindly; but when public newspapers are filled with boastful accounts of outrages perpetrated upon defenceless women by stalwart men, we do say that their words fall upon our ears as utterly worthless sounds. Honest, open investigation, testing it if you will, is right enough; we hate fraud, and would gladly unmask it wherever we know it to occur; but to do evil even that good may come; to fight evil with

evil weapons, is but sorry policy at best. Overcome evil with good ; never lower yourselves to criminate another ; and if you do find sensitives adulterating their manifestations, use your influence to induce them to go and sin no more by your honest endeavors to throw around them such good influences that the very desire to impose may vanish from their breasts.

IMPROMPTU POEM. — THE MESSENGER BIRD.

I dreamed one night of a beautiful bird
 Whose plumage was blue as the sky ;
 A near to my homestead this beautiful bird
 On pinions of azure did fly.
 I said to the songster, " Why comest thou here,
 Why earthward doth wend thy glad way ? "
 And the beautiful creature responded in song,
 " I'm a messenger sent on love's way
 From the homes of the angels to visit the earth
 To give to mankind of my joy,
 To sing in their ears a glad song of the blest
 Which forever my comrades employ."

I gazed at this songster with plumage so bright,
 And thought that perhaps it might be
 But a fanciful vision disturbing my rest ;
 Tho' my spirit from sadness was free
 From the moment those pinions outspread in the air
 Betokened this messenger's flight,
 A wonderful feeling of gladness and peace
 Seemed changing to day the dark night.
 And as he was singing, this minstrel divine,
 A thought that was deeper than all
 My dreams and my fancies swept over my soul,
 Revealing love's magical call.
 Away in the distance of long buried years,
 Away in the dim distant past,
 I thought of a loved one who'd passed away
 From this earth, whose sweet words at the last
 Were, " Whenever I see you in sorrow or pain,
 I'll send from my mansion above
 A beautiful songster to lighten your load,
 To convince you of heavenly love."

The bird ceased his singing, I saw him no more,
 He had fled to his home in the sky;
 But the beautiful spirit inspiring his song
 Remained in my heart ne'er to die,
 And whenever I hear them, and often I hear
 Those accents melodious and sweet,
 I know that a loved one is singing to me
 In tones which my spirit can greet.
 Tho' the form and the symbol have vanished from sight,
 And the vision returned not again,
 The melody chanted by that little bird
 Sounds ever with this glad refrain:
 Tho' the toils and the sorrows of earth-life may press
 Like a cloud of thick darkness on thee,
 There is never an hour when a messenger bird
 Is not sent on love's pinion so free
 To bear to thee tidings of beauty and light,
 To tell thee of regions more fair,
 Where the eye's never dimmed by the falling of tears,
 Where the heart's ne'er rent with despair.

It may be that angels employ the dear birds,
 Whom we feed with the crumbs of our bread,
 To enlighten our spirits when saddened and lone
 Concerning the pathway they tread.
 It may be all bright things and beautiful forms
 Are messengers sent from that state
 Which mortals call golden, which lieth inside
 Of the beautiful white pearly gate.

I know not the means which the angels employ
 To reach all the children of earth,
 But of this I am certain, there is not one soul
 Confined in a cage of time's birth,
 But in some way or other a message of love
 Pulses downward from heavenly states,
 And each thought of heaven and each deed of love
 Opens wider the spiritual gates,
 Through which are admitted like visions of light,
 Like music of heavenly tone,
 Those ministering spirits who wait upon all
 And never one spirit disown.

127 SPIRIT MATERIALIZATION;

An Exposition of its Philosophy and Phenomena.

THE subject of spirit-materialization has been for some time a topic of great interest, promoting manifold inquiries and discussions, in all directions. Upon this as upon all other questions relative to the movement, Spiritualists both agree and disagree to differ; some hold the matter tentatively, and express no definite opinion upon it one way or the other; some belligerently denounce and emphatically deny that there is any truth whatever in form-manifestations, while there are again others—and in many places these are not in the minority—who declare that they have received such absolute tests of spirit-presence and identity in the presence of materializing mediums that they would be giving the lie to their own senses, and denying the conclusions of their most unprejudiced judgment, were they to attribute the phenomena witnessed at the séances they have frequented to any other cause than the intelligent operation of invisible spirits over material substance, causing that substance to so far obey their bidding as to become tangible and then invisible at their will. Such an enormous mass of evidence has already been accumulated in all parts of the world, in favor of the genuineness of these phenomena, that to attribute them to trickery is to endow legerdemain, as practiced by so-called spirit-mediums, with a power to baffle the astutest intellects of the day; for the upholders of the materialization theory are not superannuated “cranks” or imbeciles, by any means, but among their number may be found many of the smartest business men of almost all the leading cities of the world.

We must always allow a fair margin for hallucination, superstition, overwrought fancy, excited imagination, im-

perfect observation, diseased mentality, trickery, and all the other causes to which the opposition refers the belief in materialization; but allowing a fair margin for these errors is a totally different thing from that unfair method of condemnation which undertakes to call a person a dupe, or incompetent, for no other reason than that his range of spiritualistic experience has been wider than that of those who have either not investigated at all, or who, having investigated, have been unfortunate in their experiences even when not prejudiced against something they knew nothing about, having had no experience in regard to it. We must look the matter fairly in the face, see where the ground is firm, and where weak under our feet, and setting out in our search for truth devoid of prejudice, in no way committed to foregone conclusions, we may hope before we have completed our study of this fascinating subject to have arrived at some solution of the problem. Even though our rule for solving it may not be so absolute as to explain away every difficulty that can possibly arise, we may find out enough concerning the laws and methods of spirit-action to justify us in asserting that we are not totally in the dark concerning this great question of the day.

Spirit materialization, so called, is in no sense opposed to any known law of nature; none of the physical sciences contend against it, while metaphysics can only declare it in strict accordance with metaphysical postulates. Let us first examine the claims put forward in its defence, and in explanation of its wonders, by those who have been inspired to give scientific and philosophical descriptions of its *modus operandi*. Matter, according to physical science, setting metaphysics completely aside, is capable of disintegration and seeming destruction, though we are told by scientists that there are no grounds in nature for concluding that any particle of substance is ever lost. Creation means to the believer in the atomic theory simply organization or integration, while destruction only implies disorganization or disintegration. A solid body is therefore an agglomerate mass of particles, each one by itself invisible to the human eye, and even to the

microscope, but visible when grouped in sufficient quantities, and condensed into certain forms. Solids, fluids and gases are, according to chemical demonstration, only transient appearances, modes of the manifestation of substance; they are all convertible into impalpable ether, that ether can be again converted into solid matter. Materializations and dematerializations occur in the chemist's laboratory; they are, it is true, induced by means of mechanical contrivances, but no machinery created itself; it is the product of human genius; thus it requires intellect, mentality, to construct the apparatus whereby such physical phenomena as are daily presented to the student of chemistry can be made to transpire. Now the claim made for materialization in the spirit circle is that minds disrobed of material organisms are working behind the scenes, using the cabinet where the medium does or does not sit, as the case may be, as the dark chamber wherein, free from the positive action of light, they can build up forms out of the atmosphere, which holds in solution every form of mineral, vegetable and animal life. It is further stated that a medium for such phenomena must possess a physique which generates a peculiar magnetic or electric force, which the spirits use as a point of connection between themselves and the surrounding atmosphere. The next point emphasized is the help the spirits can derive from healthy, harmonious sitters, who generate a large amount of vital force, and impregnate the air with copious life-emanations. These, it is said, can be added to what is taken from the medium, and form a more powerful nucleus around which a full form resembling that worn by one now departed from earth can be extemporized.

We must ever bear in mind that the human body, constantly throwing off emanations from its every part, must be continually charging the earth with the devitalized substances which were once its component parts; eyes, teeth, hair, skin, bones, muscles, nerves, all are in the atmosphere, needing only the alchemic touch of some master-mind to will the particles out of which they are constructed into physical forms, and then again to com-

mand them back into their previous invisible condition, and matter being forced to obey the command of *will*, the phenomena of materialization and dematerialization are accomplished.

The question of darkness as a necessary adjunct at circles is, in the opinion of many, a very grave one. Of course it is easy to argue logically from nature that darkness is in no sense a necessary proof of fraud, as nature has dark cabinets beneath the earth where forms are prepared to bear the light only after their earlier germinative periods have passed. As in the upbuilding of a human body nine months' darkness in the mother's womb is necessary for the unfoldment of the fœtus, so it can be argued may nine minutes, for instance, be necessary to build up the *fac simile* of the human organism in the darkness of the cabinet in the séance-room. Light, however, may be burning brightly in the room while the cabinet is dark, and not interfere with the development of the forms which are built up in darkness, and then brought out into the light; but it may further be argued that the very dim light which is usually all that is permitted to the sitters is as much as the forms can stand, as they are not sufficiently solid to bear much pressure of material light upon them; and again, it may be logically reasoned that the positive, active influence of light upon the sitters and the atmosphere occasions a rapid consumption of the very force without which the phenomena cannot be presented. We all know something of the active consuming power of light. We all know how quickly flowers wither, eyes become tired, and a feeling of general languor oppresses the inmates in a very hot and brilliantly-lighted room; thus it is altogether a too hasty conclusion to arrive at that there must be some collusion somewhere when light is forbidden entrance to a chamber where materialization is expected.

On the other hand, there are many reasons for desiring the manifestations to take place in the light, as they are far more convincing to the honest inquirer who demands sensuous proof of spirit-action when he is allowed *the unfettered* use of his eyesight. The testimony of the

eye is very important, and when as a witness it is almost ruled out of court, because of darkness, one very strong means of verifying the phenomena is cut off. In promiscuous circles the power is often weak and fitful, and when there is a very miscellaneous company present, including many sceptics and some positive antagonists, especially where the circle is apt to be unruly and the medium is exhausted with too frequent sittings, the phenomena are apt to be ambiguous, and transformation is often substituted for materialization. In large public circles held at a medium's own residence, visitors and often sceptics get great satisfaction by holding interviews with their own spirit-friends; but very often nothing definite occurs, and people go away muttering, if they do not speak it aloud, that they have been humbugged. One really satisfactory séance does more good, and is more credit to the cause of Spiritualism, than hundreds of unsatisfactory attempts to obtain convincing spirit-manifestations. We therefore always advocate the holding of circles under the best possible conditions, and these are usually to be found under private auspices. If you read the standard works on spiritual phenomena, by Wallace, Crookes and other scientists of repute, you will learn that they were most convinced in their own homes, and at times when they made the mediums most comfortable, putting them at their ease and making them feel that they were among friends, not at the mercy of inquisitors.

An entirely wrong idea has got possession of a great many minds concerning mediums in general, and physical mediums in particular. There is a widespread belief current in society that professional mediums as a rule are rogues and impostors, and that it is very necessary to keep a sharp eye upon them for fear of falling a prey to their wiles. Journals professing to be published in support of Spiritualism have recommended that all such mediums be treated as though they were dishonest until proved the reverse. The mingled injustice, inhumanity and absurdity of any such position is self-evident to every unprejudiced outsider. It is indeed a most illegal course to pursue to adjudge any one guilty

until proof of his guilt has been forthcoming ; indeed, in the case of a prisoner at the bar suspected of the commission of fearful crime, the law holds him innocent until his guilt is proved. But the implication of guilt, or the mere suspicion of it in thought, is highly objectionable as an element of mind brought into contact with any sensitive person, and mediumship results from intense sensitiveness, or, to put it the other way, the possession of mediumistic gifts renders the possessor of them highly sensitive. The influence of silent, unspoken thought is never sufficiently estimated. A thought can heal, a thought can destroy, a thought can attract an angel, a thought can attract a fiend. Suspicion, hatred, connivance, must of necessity attract spirits of a very low grade of morality, and wherever these thoughts are in the ascendant in the minds of sitters, the mediums and sitters alike are in great danger.

Promiscuous séances are often causes of great scandal and grave offense, not because the medium is a designing culprit, but because of the impurity of thought prevalent in the room, and the biological influence of those who have come for no other purpose than to break up the circle, expose the medium and then rush into print, declaring that all that took place was fraudulent, that they knew it would be so beforehand, and that they went to the séance for the express purpose of showing up the trickery. Now we are not intending to throw the entire burden of responsibility upon the circle, by any means. Mediums are no more perfect, no more truthful, than the rest of mankind. They are simply more than usually impressible, and for that reason are affected either for good or for evil far more readily than the majority of mankind. We have had a long and wide experience with sensitives, and no matter how much they may boast of their own independence and self-reliance, we never knew either a physical or test-medium yet who was not in many ways like a thermometer or barometer, registering the condition of thought with which, for the time being, he was brought immediately in contact. You *have no doubt* noticed how very changeable and capri-

cious many mediumistic people are ; how quickly they alternate from grave to gay and then from gay to grave again ; how religious they will appear one day, and how skeptical the the next, Many persons hastily attribute these variations in the mental and moral condition of mediums to hypocrisy ; to a desire to be all things to all men in an unwarrantable sense ; but all such harsh judgments should be avoided ; the medium in such instances is a mesmeric subject, and is involuntarily affected by the prevailing thought-sphere which surrounds him for the moment. Such mediums are among the most valuable for giving evidence of spirit control to scientific minds. They are natural seers and somnambulists, and when taken under the sheltering wing of some kind and hospitable seeker after truth, carefully guarded in a pleasant home from the untoward influences of the outside world, generously compensated for their time, energy and the exercise of their wonderful gifts, they can soon be made available for the exclusive use of truthful spirits, who will give through them none but satisfactory manifestations.

Whenever a wealthy Spiritualist finds a really useful medium battling with adverse conditions, and too weak to stem the current of opposing forces, if he will step in and engage that medium to give séances under his auspices, inviting only such persons as he knows to be honorable and upright, the manifestations will soon assume such proportions as to do more good in a single evening than is now accomplished by many a hundred ill-directed séances.

A great hue and cry is constantly raised about the mercenariness of mediums, and the evils springing from the admission into circles of all who can pay the entrance fee. Now it would be folly to altogether deny the existence of this evil, and it would also be a mistaken kindness to uphold an inordinate love of money when manifested in an instrument of the spirit world ; but a great deal too much is made of this love of money in mediums. In the first place, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that mammon-worship is the prevailing idol-

atry of the age. The severest iconoclasm is none too severe when directed against the modern calf of gold. Is it to be wondered at, when wealth is the passport to fame, social standing and the outward enjoyments of life everywhere in the modern world, that sensitives dwelling in the midst of a mammon-idolizing community, should be weak enough to yield somewhat to the prevailing temptation and the prevailing psychology of the day? This is more of an explanation than an excuse; but we will not allow persons whose every thought turns upon the making and saving of a dollar to flaunt their reproaches in the teeth of mediums who are perhaps too fond of money and too eager in its quest, without answering them back by telling them that their first duty is to cast the beam out of their own eye, and then they can see clearly to cast the mote out of the medium's eye. The desire for material accumulation, on the part of mediums for physical manifestations, arises in part, also, from the prevailing belief that mediumship, when constantly exercised, breaks down the health, and the kindred false belief that mediumship cannot be practiced regularly, for a great length of time, without the power commencing to wane, therefore the medium thinks it necessary to "make hay while the sun shines," though to their credit more than their shame be it said, that a medium is rarely known to amass a fortune, as, though often fond of making money, mediums usually let it slip swiftly through their fingers, and when the truth is known, it will be found that much that they are supposed to have thrown away in profligacy they have really devoted to the needs of suffering humanity.

Dissipation of every kind is destructive of mediumistic power, and the reason why so many mediums appear shattered in health is because in moments of weakness they have yielded to an acquired taste, often imparted to them by some of their patrons, for alcohol, opium, and other abominations. Never offer a medium a glass of liquor after a séance. Never ask a sensitive person into a bar-room. Never by any hint you throw out in conversation lead their thoughts into immoral channels. On the contrary, if ever you find them about to yield to de-

basing impulses, strive to turn their minds into other channels, and be their friends, not by assisting them into the pit of degradation and then leaving them to wallow in the mire when you have helped them into it, as many false friends of physical mediums have done, but use such power and influence as you have, and sensitive people are peculiarly susceptible to the influence of real friends to keep them from falling into the many chasms which are always yawning beneath the feet of the unwary.

You will find, on close acquaintance with mediums in general, that nothing tires and irritates them more than the necessity of holding séances under adverse circumstances. Many of them positively dread the hour to arrive when they must again put themselves at the mercy of any one who rings the door-bell, pays his money, and demands entrance to the circle. The life of a physical medium is not an easy one. Nothing is more trying than to be constantly the subject of antagonistic and suspicious wills. The constant effort to overcome them is burdensome and exhausting, and as the physical medium is not usually so fully protected by strong-willed, intellectual bands of intelligences as those who are developed solely for intellectual purposes, the danger of the sitters influencing the conduct of the medium and the phenomena is very great.

The recent and ever-recurring newspaper war of words concerning mediums, column after column devoted one day to exposure, and the next day to defense of materialization, would be a sheer waste of printer's ink were it not that all such controversy leads the thoughtful and reflective mind to ponder well the various questions raised in the debate. Of two things the dispassionate reader must be pretty well convinced after reading the papers, viz., that through any medium who may be up for discussion at the time, manifestations occur that are thoroughly convincing as proofs of spirit presence, power, and what is more, identity to many apparently competent witnesses, and that through the same medium at other times there is strong presumptive evidence that, to speak mildly, the manifestations are not all right.

The position taken by Mr. Applebee of this city, in an essay published in *Facts*, is from our standpoint largely erroneous, as the essayist is much too severe upon mediums who are not as honest as they should be. Knowing Mr. Applebee to be a gentleman of uncompromising integrity himself, we can well understand his indignation at fraud wherever he may find it. We do not doubt that his sole object in being severe is to put down iniquity. Did we believe that harsh measures would even lessen a prevailing evil, we should advocate them ourselves; but our experience has taught us that severity does not mend matters, as it can on the one hand only drive the sinner to desperation, and on the other raise up a fanatical crew of defenders who will gather round the outcast, and invest him with a martyr's halo. Mediums are addicted, unfortunately, to the prevalent vices of the age, but as a class they are not worse than any other class; you will find fully as much cheating in any trade or profession as among mediums. The great need of the hour is scientific investigation. Neither believe nor disbelieve in the medium with whom you sit. Let the phenomena speak for themselves. A medium may be true to-day and false to-morrow; a phenomenon genuine to-day and spurious to-morrow; but what of it? The false can never destroy the true, while the true never justifies or condones the false. Every separate phenomenon must stand on its own individual basis, without regard to anything you know or fancy about the character or antecedents of the person through whom it occurs, and to guard against deception we advise all to insist upon fair and honorable modes of conducting circles, or if a medium or his associates should refuse to allow reasonable conditions, then refuse to sit in the circle, but make no fuss about it, as you are justified in declaring under what conditions you are willing to sit, while the conductor of the circle is equally justified in deciding under what conditions you can be allowed to sit.

Having now briefly expounded the philosophy and made mention of some of the conditions necessary to obtaining the most satisfactory demonstrations of spiritual power through physical mediumship, we feel called

upon to devote what time remains to a consideration of the various phases of apparitions which are constantly appearing at what are termed séances for full-form manifestations. The sensational condemnation, and equally sensational vindication, of certain public mediums, can do nothing to ventilate truth concerning what actually occurs at an ordinary materializing séance, though it may do much to awaken curiosity and arouse public interest in such phenomena. That fraud, pure and simple, is the order of the day, as some writers allege, we do not believe; indeed, in many instances we positively know to the contrary; but it must not be forgotten that there is such a thing as transfiguration, or transformation, and many appearances, which are usually mistaken for fully materialized, independent forms, are often only the medium disguised—not fraudulently, but while in deep trance, under spirit control, brought to the front of the cabinet, and often far out into the room—not personating a spirit, but strongly influenced by spirit power, and actually for the time so identified with the medium as to cause the medium's form and features to resemble those of the spirit who has for the time taken possession, and who uses this means of reaching friends who are in the circle. Though not generally understood, this phenomenon is just as natural and legitimate as trance-mediumship. When any of you seek an interview with a departed friend through an entranced sensitive, you will often see a marked change in the countenance of the medium. This change is carried a stage further in transformation. You have not been cheated when you have held a conversation with one of your spirit-friends through a medium who is really fully controlled by him and made to look like him. The medium in spirit is often far away, and a friend of one of the sitters is occupying his body for the time being. Of course, if any too great claim has been made before the circle formed or the manifestations began, confusion is liable to ensue and misapprehension to prevail; but this does not detract from the genuineness of the manifestation—it only proves that the phase expected was superseded by another.

It is not usually safe to promise anything before a séance. Tell the auditors to observe necessary rules and decide upon the manifestations by using their own powers of discernment, and not to conclude beforehand that anything definite will occur. Results can very seldom be guaranteed. The conjurer can guarantee results if he is provided with necessary apparatus, but not otherwise. The medium, who differs from the conjurer in that he carries no apparatus, cannot decide beforehand as to whether the invisible apparatus will be provided or not. We have known many mediums who were to have been paid large amounts for séances had the results been satisfactory to the sitters, who sat evening after evening and got no results and no money. The fourth or fifth time of sitting manifestations would take place. Everybody wanted them on the first occasion. The sitters would gladly have paid for them, and the medium needed money. Now if the medium had been a trickster, and could have produced to order any manifestation desired or expected, is it likely that he would have been foolish enough to waste his own and the sitters' time night after night for no recompense? The conjurer is certain, the medium uncertain. The conjurer is more popular and makes far more money than the medium. Ventriloquism and masquerading, added to clever tricks of legerdemain, will always draw a crowd. Then, if the mediums who are to-day subjected to such gross insults and foul accusations as those heaped upon many who are now prominently before the public, can perform all that takes place at their séances without the aid of invisible power, why do they not relinquish mediumship and stand out before the world on their merits as conjurers? Scarcely any professional persons in any capacity have made greater financial successes than Maskelyne, Cooke, Dobler, and many another *prestidigitateur*. These men have traveled everywhere, been *fêted* and caressed by the wealthiest of the land, and yet their manifestations fade into utter insignificance as marvels when contrasted with those of many a despised and persecuted medium.

We do not deny that there is an admixture of fraud in

many séances, but no amount of chaff can destroy the value of a single grain of wheat, and it is not the chaff but the wheat that builds up the reputation of every medium who is permanently sustained in the following of his vocation. Some one has received an indisputable test, some one has been healed of a painful ailment, some one has received valuable advice or needed consolation, before the trumpeter goes forth and heralds the praise of the medium in whose circle he has sat; the medium may sometimes be unfaithful, the alloy of error may be introduced to make up for what lacks of the fine gold of truth; but if you had a thousand counterfeit notes and only one genuine bill in your pocket, and you should stumble upon the one that was genuine, one thousand counterfeits would not prevent its passing; the single good bill would stand on its own merits, and would need no recommendation other than its intrinsic worth. So if you had one thousand genuine notes and only one counterfeit, and you should attempt to pass the one that was false, all the thousand genuine notes could not make the false one true.

We are convinced that the spirit-friends of those who say they recognize their loved ones are really there to be recognized. Even though the phenomena be only transformation of the medium, or entrancement, the spirit is there and desires to be recognized by his friend, and is so far able to make himself felt by his friend in the earthly form that that friend, feeling the spiritual presence, experiences a thrill of recognition and is ready to go forth and proclaim everywhere that he has talked with a dear one from beyond the grave. This is not delusion, and even should a medium be ignorant or false enough to deny his mediumship, and declare himself a trickster, a lie can never destroy a truth. It is not the word of the medium you have to rely upon, but the proof vouchsafed at the time you witness the phenomena. The word of one who avows himself an impostor is of little value anyway, for one who would act a lie is surely capable of telling one. Each separate phenomenon must be judged on its own basis, and as you are not called upon by Spiritualism to believe anything, but

rather to prove all things, the confessions of mediums and every phase of current scandal, now, alas! very prevalent, should weigh nothing with you when you address yourselves to the investigation of phenomena in sober earnest.

That there are genuine materializations we know, for we have witnessed them again and again. We have been present when forms were built up out of thin air, and as rapidly dissolved again, not by sinking into the floor, but by slowly fading out in presence of all spectators. We have known mediums searched, stripped of all their clothing, and attired in new garments provided by the host or hostess. We have known the séance to be held in the parlor of a private residence in a house where confederacy was impossible, and yet three and four forms would be seen outside the cabinet together, one or more frequently recognized by strangers in the room. If there is fraud anywhere, we certainly do not justify it. It is our aim to extirpate it; but this cannot be done either by deception or violence. We challenge those who are so loud in decrying all materialization as imposition, to duplicate it when at its best and highest. This no one has ever successfully done. Tares and wheat always grow together in the field of the world, and will continue to thrive in the field of mediumship, until finally uprooted elsewhere. It is the single successful experiment that demonstrates a fact scientifically. Not a million failures or impositions can offset one solitary truth substantiated by incontrovertible evidence. Fear not. Though "the false may reign a little season," you may be sure it will but promote the earnest search for truth. The persistent demand for justice will raise up in response to human need an array of mediums and a class of phenomena that neither slander, bigotry nor falsehood can ever dethrone or impair.

ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF THE PRESENT DAY.

FROM whatever standpoint modern spiritualism may be regarded, we must all admit that it is one of the most significant signs of our times. To every intelligent student it must appear synonymous to a great degree with the religious conceptions of the entire ancient world, as all nations of which history makes any mention have closely interwoven it with their religion and philosophy. Among the nations of remotest antiquity not only a belief in the immortality of the soul, but in addition thereto a perpetual recognition of the presence and activity of the departed constituted a very large factor in their religious belief. Not only did they believe in spiritualism, but their belief so far influenced their daily life that no important undertakings were commenced without first consulting the oracles, who occupied a similar position in the ancient world to that filled by the so-called spirit mediums of to-day. When, therefore, an anniversary is celebrated in this country, styled the thirty-eighth anniversary of the advent of modern spiritualism, the phrase would be nonsensical if the adjective modern were not introduced. It is our purpose this morning to consider wherein modern spiritualism agrees with and wherein it differs from ancient spiritualism. To many professing Christians spiritualism appears a gigantic delusion, a foul imposture, to be classed with charlatanism and humbug of every description, but this view, intended to reflect the greatest possible discredit upon the system and its advocates, does not by any means satisfy the minds of the strictly orthodox, who are never contented when referring to it to consider it as anything other than a monstrous

and terrible evil, forced upon the world by his satanic majesty, who, in order the more readily to deceive mankind, constantly endeavors to assume the garb of an angel of light, often succeeding so well in his nefarious ambitions that the unwary are constantly entrapped in the meshes of this dread destroyer of souls. We certainly do not wonder that this position is taken by those who are never able to see anything but evil outside of their own communion. To them all innovations are sinful, all progress diabolical. To such as these, the entire world is deluded, save that small section of it which professes to embrace the very narrowest form of what is ordinarily called Christianity, but which bears about as much resemblance to the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the gospel as chaff does to wheat, or the most inferior metal to the finest gold. Those who regard spiritualism in this most unfavorable of all unfavorable lights are consistent only in this, that they do not confine their sweeping denunciations to the modern movement, but attribute all the seership of the ancient world, with the exception of an infinitesimal portion of that of Israel, to the same infernal source. To them the Egyptian, Hindoo, Persian, Greek or Roman prophet, seer, sage or sibyl is either an impostor, or a dupe of Satan. To fortify such an absurd assumption they twist and contort a number of passages in the Old Testament referring to witchcraft, sorcery, and necromancy, but with strange, and in many instances we venture to affirm inexcusable blindness to facts, they persist in repudiating and condemning an entire system and large classes of individuals for no other reason than because the writers of the Bible have been straightforward enough to present to their readers both sides of the subject; but when we remember that Isaiah declared that under certain circumstances the Sabbath was an abomination, the observance of all religious festivals and ceremonies displeasing to the Almighty, and yet those who read his words, and profess to endorse them, still continue to regard the fourth commandment of the Decalogue as of

divine origin, the impartial observer at once opens his eyes to the one-sided bigotry which interprets scripture fairly in one instance, when an institution is being discussed which meets the approval of a critic, but utterly refuses to employ a similar canon of interpretation when a subject is under discussion which prevailing sentiment has placed under the ban. We are certainly not prepared to eulogize spiritualism blindly, whether we regard it in its ancient garb or in its modern dress, but we desire to keep as far from indulging in wholesale condemnation as from a fanatical advocacy. Like everything else in the world, spiritualism partakes largely of the character of the age in which it appears. It is, moreover, considerably affected by the channels or mediums, by means of whom its influence is felt and in the presence of whom its phenomena transpire. We do not claim for it a supernatural, even though we may grant it a supermundane origin. Its intelligent advocates in every age and clime have vigorously repudiated supernaturalism, properly so called, boasting not of a divine revelation, removed entirely from human experience, but distinctly claiming that the revelation in which they were participants was a result of natural law, emanating from human intelligences who communicate with the world in purely natural ways. The gods and goddesses of old, as you are all doubtless aware, were never supposed to be entirely separated from the human race. They were for the most part human personages, removed from the material body to another, but equally natural state of being. The spirits of the ancestors were and still are invoked in all parts of the Eastern world, while the traditions of the aborigines of every recently rediscovered country prove that the prevailing belief of ancient times, universally distributed, was thoroughly spiritualistic, but in no sense supernatural. A belief in spirits is entirely distinct from a belief in God. The two beliefs may flourish side by side, but the one can never be confounded with the other without the most mischievous results occurring from such a confusion

of ideas. Direct revelation from the Eternal Being has no connection whatever with the appearances of angels and other beings manifesting human attributes so constantly referred to in the Old Testament. The Semitic races always believed that the Eternal Being spoke to his creatures in a still small voice which addressed itself exclusively to their most interior spiritual consciousness. We find this conviction pervading the entire Hebrew Bible. We are told of the voice of God in the very first chapter of Genesis, but in connection with this voice we hear nothing whatever of an external appearance; in the days of Elijah we hear of a storm, an earthquake, and a fire preceding the delivery of a divine message to the prophet; but the writer of the narrative distinctly declares that the Lord was neither in the storm, nor in the fire, nor in the earthquake. These were only preliminary manifestations, the presence of God not being made manifest to Elijah until he heard a still small voice. This same idea appears again in the New Testament, where we are informed in the Acts of the Apostles that on the day of Pentecost, following the ascension of Jesus, the assembled multitude in Jerusalem were warned of the approach of the Holy Spirit by the sound of a rushing mighty wind, and by the appearance of cloven tongues of fire; but the still small voice was the manifestation of the spirit itself.

What is ordinarily termed spirit communion signifies nothing more than continued communion with human beings who have cast aside the material form. Some of them are naturally our superiors, while others are without doubt inferior to the wisest and noblest men and women yet on earth. To say that Spiritualism is of God is true in the same sense that it is a truth that whatever occurs in obedience to natural law takes place with the sanction or at least with the permission of the Divine Being, for without this permission nothing whatever could take place in the universe. To say that a certain kind of spiritualism is diabolical is to speak truly, but it is no more

a truth that certain spiritual manifestations emanate from infernal sources than that a devilish impulse prompts mankind to pervert the gift of speech, or any other faculty with which the human family is endowed. Spiritualism is simply no exception to a universal rule. It exists now, and always has existed, and doubtless always will exist in one form or another. But whether we make it a blessing or a curse depends upon ourselves. We can readily understand an orthodox objection to spiritualism as a whole, when we remember that the creed of orthodoxy places one portion of humanity so far away in heaven that they cannot return to earth, and the remainder so far off from the earth in hell that they cannot return. If no human spirit can return to revisit earth when the material body is buried, if there is any truth at all in this spirit communion, the communications must come either from a race of beings called angels, who do not belong to the human family at all, or from fallen angels, whom Christianity calls fiends or devils. But even should we grant the truthfulness of this position, which we certainly do not, we should not in that case be able to see why in modern days the angels never approached the earth, or if approaching it at all, only very rarely, while the devils are constantly in attendance upon humanity.

The theory of those who take the position assumed by all who have publicly declared their belief that spiritualism was a diabolical system have, though perhaps unwittingly, shown the cloven hoof and tail of their own system, which is often only little better than a phase of devil worship, in which his satanic majesty is always represented as having the greatest power, while the spirit of Eternal Goodness exerts a much smaller influence upon the world than does his adversary. The assumption is so preposterous that to an unprejudiced thinker its absurdity is its own refutation. We can understand, and to a certain extent sympathize with the agnostic who declares himself entirely ignorant of all spiritual things, and who, therefore, claims to know absolutely nothing of the con-

stitution and laws of the spiritual universe ; to him spirit communion is simply an unsolved problem, and a problem for the solution of which he has no rule. The modest declaration of the honest sceptic, that he cannot explain spiritualism and really does not know whether there is any truth in it or not, is entirely different from the blind and unreasonable opposition which religious bigotry and intolerance have constantly levelled against it. The skeptic is merely a doubter, the agnostic is one who says he does not know ; such persons, if they are honest truth-seekers, very often make the bravest and most efficient champions of spiritualism when they lend themselves to its investigation and become convinced that there is really something in it ; not a vague unintelligible something, which practically amounts to little more than nothing, but a definite, tangible something, which they have discovered by earnest research and patient study. No science, philosophy or religion, worthy of the name, demands blind credulity. A true theology is itself a science ; correctly speaking it is a science of divine things. Now a science simply means a knowledge. We may speak both of spiritual and material science. In one sense, therefore, if spiritualism be true it must be a science, and has it not been for the past thirty-eight years the persistent boast of all spiritualists that when they became convinced of spirit communion, any faith which they previously had in a life beyond the grave was set aside for positive knowledge of such life ? But though in this sense we may declare that there is such a science as that of the spirit, we must also remember that as every science is distinct from all others, as each science has its own formulas, and as one does not become a geologist, for instance, by studying astronomy, or a botanist by studying chemistry ; as colleges and professors are provided severally for each of the so-called exact sciences, so that a man may be an expert in one scientific direction without knowing anything at all of some other science ; in the science of spiritual things, the professors may

be all in the spirit world; the rules and formulas, the colleges may be all alike spiritual. If this be the case we need not wonder that given results cannot be commanded by mortals who wish to dictate their own conditions to the spirit world. Certainly we may affirm that mathematics is the only exact science known, and in mathematical science it is an undisputed fact that every problem can be solved by a definite rule, there being a rule for the solution of every problem under the sun; but the rule must be in all cases discovered and applied, or the problem remains unsolved, and as every one does not know every rule, every problem cannot be solved by the majority. To say that in spiritual productions effects do not invariably follow causes, or to dream that the same effect does not invariably spring from the same cause is to decidedly err in one's calculation; but the difficulty which besets the student of spiritual science at every turn is that in the majority of instances while a rule exists he can neither discover it nor apply it, both its discovery and application being confined to intelligences of a higher order of development than himself. No one who has made a study of so-called miracles can have failed to be struck by their extraordinary spontaneity. William Howitt in his remarkably useful and instructive book entitled "A History of the Supernatural," brings forward many striking proofs of this fact, while "Nineteenth Century Miracles," the work of Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, records an immense number of most remarkable occurrences which have taken place in almost every part of the world during the present century without their being either anticipated or wished for by those among whom they appeared. There is nothing singular in modern spiritualism in any of its phases, when we compare it with that of ancient days; it is an old friend or an old enemy, whichever you choose to regard it, in a new dress; the facts to which it calls the attention of the modern world are identical with those to which it summoned the attention of the people of ancient days. But it may be

asked why do spiritual manifestations break out like epidemics at certain times and in certain places? Surely there is nothing more singular in the epidemical manifestation of spiritual power in this country in this century than in the wonderful spread of genius, the marvelous achievements of invention, and the almost miraculous growth of this country inside of the past hundred and ten years. The old idea of the philosophers, that the development of the earth was accomplished through the process of revolving cycles had an unmistakable foundation in fact, and though many vagaries and false theories were undoubtedly connected with Plato's doctrine of a divine year, and other philosophic speculations, and while there are doubtless many crudities attaching to modern theosophical theories concerning the belief of India with reference to the revolution of cycles, the central idea is incontrovertible, for account for it as we may or fail to account for it altogether, the fact stares us in the face that there are special periods of enlightenment on earth followed by corresponding periods of mental darkness; dark ages seem to follow the light ages as naturally and inevitably as night follows upon day or as winter succeeds the time of harvest.

In the days of Jesus, the end of the world was constantly referred to both as a closely impending and also as a far distant event. There can be no doubt that two distinct ideas of what is termed in the New Testament the end of the world, or more correctly speaking, the end of an age, possessed the minds of the primitive Christians; they were living at a time when an old order of things passed away and all things became new; the Jewish nation was about to be broken up and the members of the House of Israel to be scattered over the whole earth, to be in future no longer a distinct nation, possessing distinctive political power, but simply a religious and fraternal order, held together by laws, customs and observances in no way interfering with the system of government of any land where they might reside. Imperial Rome was on the verge of bankruptcy, her condition was

that of a house divided against itself, which we all know cannot continue to stand. While Titus was besieging Jerusalem, the hardier nations of northern Europe were preparing to swoop down like vultures upon the vain, haughty mistress of all the then civilized world. No one who was a reader of the signs of those times could fail to see manifold intimations of an approaching conflict of the severest and most deadly character. The old order of society had scarcely a leg to stand upon, every prop was being removed from its falling edifice, and like an enfeebled old man whose supports and crutches are taken away, the then existing order of things was trembling before its inevitable fall. The religion of Rome was as unsafe as its government and social order. Everybody was laughing at it. The philosophers denied it openly, the common people sneered at it in secret, and were only restrained by fear from attacking it outwardly. What was to be done? Surely if the old society was to be disorganized and destroyed, some new order must be ready to rise, phoenix-like, from the ashes of the old. This new order of things was the new heavens and the new earth, so firmly believed in and so ardently expected by the early Christians, for primitive Christianity dealt with all the vital questions of the age; the earliest Christian teachers were reformers and agitators,—they were prophets rather than priests, for the prophet is needed to lead a people to some new enterprise, while a priest is always an echo. Prophecy looks to the future, while a priesthood leans on the past; the prophet is a natural radical, the priest a natural conservative. Jesus and his immediate followers were all prophets, therefore they were detested by the chief priests and the rulers of the synagogues of their day; they were also held in the greatest detestation by the officials of the Roman authority, for a corrupt system, rapidly becoming effete, one which by reason of its unsoundness cannot bear the light of investigation, always persecutes the investigator and strives to intimidate him by threatening him both with

present and future chastisement. A great many passages which are said to refer to the total destruction of the world on the last great day were originally simple allusions to the certain overthrow of an order of society then existing in all lands over which Rome held dominion. Soon after that time, what was meant by the world really did come to an end and the new world was created out of the ashes of the old. We speak to-day of the world's opinions, of its customs, beliefs, sanctions and prejudices; well, if these usages and ideas change, the world, understood in that sense, changes necessarily; the world is changing again to-day in pretty much the same way as it changed eighteen hundred years ago. The signs of the end of the age are everywhere round about us; no country on earth can be said to be now in a settled condition; nations are rising against nations, classes against classes, just as they did at the commencement of the now closing period of time called the Christian era. Signs and wonders, great intellectual and spiritual activity in all conceivable directions, marks the present time as it marked the last noteworthy transitional period in the world's history. A great many people suppose that whatever occurs when a crisis is reached is the direct result of an importation of something from another world. They attribute all the good that is said and done at such a time to an influence proceeding directly from Deity as though God paid periodical visits to the world, and after visiting the earth retired for many centuries to his home in heaven, there to remain until the occasion of his next visit. Whatever is evil at such a time, they attribute directly to Satan, who is supposed by many to be sometimes bound and sometimes loosed, whereas the true solution of the enigma is that with the recurring advent of the world's summer the intense mental and spiritual heat which is brought to bear in a peculiarly direct way upon the sensitive and receptive earth involves a manifestation of whatever has been slowly accumulating through a long period of comparative quietness. There

are no accidents and there are no sudden events in reality. A thunder storm, no matter how unexpected, is sudden only in appearance ; a volcanic eruption, sweeping away an entire population in a single night without any warning which the people have heeded or understood, is the inevitable result of a long chain of antedatory circumstances ; for just as there comes a moment when the bird leaves its shell, or the butterfly its chrysalis, so there comes a time when a disease makes itself apparent, or a storm bursts upon one's head. Cause and effect reign everywhere ; when we are acquainted with causes and can compute with something like accuracy the length of time they will take before they blossom out into visible effects, we are never taken by surprise ; no matter what occurs we expect it and are prepared for it ; but when we do not know the cause or cannot trace it to its necessary effect we are then astonished at the occurrence of an event we had no reason to anticipate. The present upheaval of thought, the present transition of unrest, the present *renaissance*, so called, the pervading spirit of materialistic iconoclasm running parallel with the almost universal spread of a belief in Spiritualism, may all be regarded as fulfillments of prophecy, and as results springing naturally and inevitably from causes partly known and partly unknown to the community at large. It is a fact which can never be successfully denied that signs and wonders claiming a spiritual origin have always appeared at a time when intelligence has manifested a most curiously diversified character ; they have ranged from absolute grandeur and sublimity to grovelling idiocy, from the most ennobling point in morals to the most absurd and pernicious immoralities. They have been as widely apart in many instances as a rose tree and a dung heap ; but both the rose tree and the pile of manure have been quickened into an active exhibition of their true nature and character by the action of the self-same solar radiance at the same time ; when one was warmed and quickened by the increased heat of the sun's rays it

became a thing of beauty and gave off a most welcome fragrance, while the other made the atmosphere offensive to all who came near it. Such is the difference between an awakenment of what may be termed the angelic and of what may be fitly called the diabolical element in human nature and man's environment.

The question is often asked, How does Spiritualism explain the Bible?

In taking up the Bible we must consider it in three different lights, the views now prominent before the world — first, the entirely Orthodox view, that the Bible is a revelation from God, and contains no error; second, that it contains the word of God, but not all of it, not the direct word of God in the letter, but that it has in a spiritual sense a significance wherein the word of God is found, though its writers never claimed for it infallibility; and third, that the Bible is of no use to-day at all, it has outlived its usefulness if it ever had any, that it is only a mixture of legends and traditions, of no importance at the present time, and the sooner we shelve the Bible the better for civilization. There are many people who attribute present crimes and atrocities to the influence of the Bible, and think the world would be better off without it.

The first and third extreme positions are both ridiculous. The Bible is not the word of God in the Orthodox Jewish, or Orthodox Christian sense. This we are prepared to maintain and to prove. We regard the Bible as a collection of manuscripts, of different ages and different values, the ideas put forth in one part of the book differing from those of another part.

There is no divinity in the Bible that is not found in the Shastas, Vedas, or Zendavesta, and in the teachings of many of the Greek philosophers and poets, though taken all in all, the Hebrew Scriptures are superior to the Egyptian, Hindoo, Chinese or Persian, as they ought to be because newer. The Hermetic literature is older than the Judean, which grew out of the Egyptian, at the time of the exodus. When the children of Israel went

out from Egypt under Moses, we read that they borrowed from the Egyptians their jewels and precious things, which were the forms and ceremonials, as well as the ideas of their religion.

So far as the New Testament is concerned, it is a compilation of letters written at different times by men of different views and characters. No claim is made for their divine inspiration, or that they were written by God through the hand of an amanuensis. The authors only claim that they had these spiritual experiences, and recorded them, they do not say that God wrote them; therefore the Bible is more a record of inspiration than an inspired book, more a narrative of spiritual manifestations known to the ancient world than an inspired spiritual manifestation itself, and it claims to be no more than this.

Take the five books of Moses, concerning which Bishop Colenso declares that there is distinct evidence of two or more authors. It would be foolish to believe that Moses wrote the entire Pentateuch, when his death is therein recorded. We also read that no man has found his sepulchre unto this day, meaning up to the time of Ezra, the scribe, who after the Babylonish captivity carried the sacred narrative to that date. A record was always kept of the spiritual experiences of the people, and those spiritual experiences had a very wide range, from the highest and most helpful to the lowest and most degrading.

The account of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis is simply a paraphrase on David's hymn, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." It is an imagery of the creative will-power. The writer never said the world was made six thousand years ago, the heavens and the earth in six days, only that everything was made by God. God spoke and it was done; God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." It was the Word, or Logos, the divine effluence, the power of the spirit of the Eternal going forth in creative act, the expression of the divine Soul, which brought

the universe into being. If we study the universe to-day, we must come to the conclusion of a perfect plan and design in nature. Some people say that this argument is not fortified by experience, that it breaks down under scientific research. We deny that this position fails to agree with philosophy. God geometrizes; nature geometrizes. If the Infinite is nature, then there is mind in nature, therefore we arrive at the scientific fact, the axiomatic conclusion of philosophy that God geometrizes, and mind, working through nature, is the only possible explanation of nature's geometrization. The account in Genesis i. deals only with general principles, it merely affirms that God made everything. God, the Infinite Mind, Will, or the Eternal Spirit, produced the universe and all forms. This is the essence of the Hebrew cosmogony, and nothing more can be proved from a study of the Pentateuch.

Another point concerning the author of Genesis, and his erudition, is that he was plainly aware of the fact that the lower forms were created before the higher. He puts chaos first, then fishes before mammalia, and animals before man, the correct process of the earth's unfoldment. He represents this material creation as occupying a period of six geological days, recognizing the six great periods of the earth's history, the primary, secondary, tertiary, the reptilian, mammalian, and the human. Now what can be said of the seventh day, and how did God rest at that period? It is simply applicable to the geological genesis that after man was created, no other type appeared. Man's development as man has been a period of rest in this sense, that no other type has been brought into existence beyond man. The Biblical order in the development of species is in the line of correct and intelligent sequence.

But it is said, the sun, moon and stars were created altogether in one day. How can we get around that? By declaring that from the standpoint of the earthly observer they were created then, though they had been in real existence ages upon ages before. During the three

primitive periods of the earth's history, a dense vapor had surrounded the globe, its atmosphere was surcharged with dense matter, through which the sun and moon would not be visible. At the time the moon was formed, perhaps from a ring something like that which now surrounds the planet Saturn, and which was thrown off from the earth to form the moon, the earth's atmosphere was cleared from the matter that filled it, and this clarified ether enabled the earth to look up and behold the sun and the constellations. So far as the fact of the sun's then being made is concerned, we know from the order of the universe that the sun is vastly older than the earth. The sun, being the centre around which the earth moves, certainly could not have been formed after it. The child cannot be created before its parent.

In the second chapter of Genesis we come to the creation of Adam, or a red race, the germ of that powerful, influential people who ruled the world many thousand years ago, who resided in Egypt, and left their records on her ancient tablets and obelisks. They who built the pyramids and inhabited the region of the Nile were undoubtedly a red people. Ignatius Donnelly, in his great work on the submerged island of Atlantis, claims that its inhabitants, who colonized Europe on one hand, and America on the other, were the originals of that powerful race who reached such high civilization in Egypt as to have an exceptional history. The North American Indians, our red brothers, with their myths and traditions, their strong hold upon the past, seeming to stand as a connecting link with that distant age, are none other than the latest remains of the once powerful Adamic race, the Atlantian rulers, the sons of light, on whom the spirit of God in truth and knowledge was outpoured.

The Jews have always claimed to have a distinct origin from the rest of mankind, being at one time so egotistic in their own individual supremacy in the defence of the faith of Israel, that the rabbis invented the foolish story

that they were children of Eve by Adam, and the rest of mankind were the children of Eve by the serpent. The original idea was that the children of Israel were the result of a special act of God's creative power, a distinct race of the world, created at a special time and a special place. There are five great races of mankind—in accordance with the number five met everywhere in nature—the red, the white, the black, the brown and the yellow. We have the Negro, Malay, Mongolian, Caucasian, and the Red Man. It is not at all important whether man originated on one spot of the earth only, or in different parts of the world at different times; therefore, a vague general account of the origin of man is in Gen. i, 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." The account in Gen. ii. of the garden of Eden, located in Western Asia, where there was not a man to till the ground, is merely the Jewish idea of their own distinct origin, and nothing more can be proved by either of the two accounts.

What does the declaration mean that the sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men? Simply that a highly developed race of men, from yielding to sensuality, mixed with an inferior race, degrading themselves without elevating the race with which they united. Jesus associated with harlots and sinners in order to reform them; he did not shun the sinner, but cast out the sin. If people have depraved tastes, they do not maintain a state of mind that will elevate the world, but they drag it down, and themselves too. All through the history of Israel runs the story of constant struggle between light and darkness, the attainment of a higher knowledge of truth, and the control of the serpent—sense.

The Bible was undoubtedly written by very learned men. It is absurd to say those early people were not scientific. Look at the pyramid of Ghizeh, whose latest possible date was B. C. 2170, over 4000 years from the present time. Look at the ruins in Central America,

dating back to ages untold, look at the remains of the mound-builders, those wondrous relics which cover the country in such profusion from Central America to Canada. Visit Peru and Yucatan and see the ruined temples and buildings erected thousands of years ago by people so intelligent that the intelligence of to-day hardly compares favorably with it. We are pointed by Homer and other ancient writers to an Olympia, an Arcadia, a beautiful dream of buried grandeur, to a prehistoric race of mankind, once famous and glorious, whose monuments were shown to Solon when he visited Egypt, and whose manuscripts were preserved in the Alexandrian library until its destruction by the Mohammedans.

There can be no doubt that these accounts, written on papyrus scrolls, were inscribed by highly educated men, who were the earliest free-masons, for free-masonry in principle goes far back beyond the time of Solon. There is a distinct revelation of free-masonry in the pyramid which stands in a perfect square, and is itself a perfect triangle in form. The three great signs of masonry are always the square, triangle and double triangle, wherever societies of masons have been formed. In ancient time, when governments were pure, the enlightened had no need of secrecy, but when persecution arose, when ecclesiastic despotism hurled against civilization its tyrannical anathemas, learning in that age of darkness had to be suppressed, those who had knowledge were obliged to veil their information in allegory, obliged to write in cipher, and hide it from their fellow-men in crypts, or in secret organizations. There are some people who say that the plain truths of the spirit cannot be expressed in plain language, they must have ciphers; therefore there are theosophical societies, and other societies of a secret nature, and people are told that after they have passed the mysteries of initiation, they will make wonderful discoveries concerning spiritual truth. Many have joined and learned nothing, because all need of secrecy consists in this, that in certain periods those who stated truth

were put in prison, and their manuscripts, dealing with the facts of the universe, were destroyed ; in comparatively recent days, in England, many were condemned to the stake because they knew too much ; but when humanity is in a free and enlightened condition, no symbols or ciphers are necessary for the preservation of the truth, or personal safety. We need not band ourselves together for greater security, or meet under the ban of secrecy. In the New Testament times, when the early Christians assembled, it was with locked doors, because they were afraid of persecution ; but would it be common sense to close our doors when we worship now, because they were locked in the time of Jesus, because the safety of the congregation then depended on their meeting secretly and silently ? A veil was thrown over the truth, and mysterious symbols used only when it stood in danger. If the Bible is written in symbol and allegory, it was because otherwise at that time the sacred writings would have been burned, and the writers put to death. Now the time has come, when that which was whispered in the ear shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops, and the real nature of that ancient literature is to be known to the world. There is no need to deny to any one an understanding of spiritual truth, for truth now comes no longer in disguise, it is no longer hunted down and in prison, for the new days are different from the old, freedom of utterance is allowed to all ; in this consists the superiority of the new Palestine over the old.

When we study the spiritual manifestations of the old world, we find different kinds of magic — black, white, grey, and red. Black magic was the practice of witchcraft, or necromancy ; the grey was an adulterated magic ; the white represented different degrees of power ; the red magic, the most powerful manifestation of spirit power. If we carefully read the Bible, we find truth and error running in parallel lines, the black thread mixed with the gold thread of divination which illumines page after page. We read that divination was often

forbidden, yet Joseph seems specially appointed to practise divination, his divining cup being found in Benjamin's sack, "the cup by which my lord divineth," wherewith Joseph interpreted dreams, and foretold coming events. And for this spiritual, mediumistic power, and on account of this gift, he seemed the especial favorite of heaven. Some other people, said to be sinners, also practised divination. Where was the difference? Were some particularly favored by a partial God? Not by any means. It is only that truth and falsehood, light and darkness, run along side by side, and will till the human race is redeemed from all error. The difference is in the people themselves, and the condemnation only in the misuse and abuse of spirit power. When clergymen can not discern the difference, and condemn all divination indiscriminately, they are blind leaders of the blind; and their congregations often fall into the pit of infidelity. It could be proved from the Bible that the Sabbath is an abomination, because under the peculiar circumstances when Isaiah said so, the people made it an abomination, one could declare that it would be better to have done with the holy regard of the seventh day, because it has been used for revelry and licentiousness. And so a departure from the distinct line of integrity in any form of spiritual manifestation was regarded as an abomination by the wise men of old, though the writers were often afflicted with the same kind of disorder which they condemned in others.

The "thus saith the Lord," which directed many of their acts, was merely the voice of some spirit perhaps no purer than they. Wholesale massacres were perpetrated because "lords" told them to kill and destroy one another. It is a mistake to allow the truth of every communication, we should test the nature of the message itself. All the crimes and atrocities committed in Jehovah's name proceeded from the spirit that got possession of the people individually. There are people to-day, who do many things that are wrong and harmful, injurious to them-

selves and others, because a spirit told them to do so. Do not be vassals of any power, or you will turn the blessing of the spirit into a curse. There is black magic still in the world, in every abuse of spiritual power, to-day. We must use our reason and conscience always, allow ourselves to be blessed with mind and sense, and use our common sense as in our dealings with our fellow-men. Spirits always begin in the life beyond the grave exactly where they end here. This truth Spiritualism never fails to affirm. In communion with spirits, we must remember that everything depends on our own state of mind. A pure, noble desire brings us into relation with pure and exalted beings, and we are lifted on wings of lofty inspiration, while an impure desire may bring us a curse instead of a blessing. We can use it for good or evil, get an influence from heaven, or hell, from the higher or nether states of being. All spirits coming into our atmosphere register not only their own thought, but reflect ours. When we become too pure to be deceived, we shall never be harmed by those who may approach us, and our influence will tend to elevate them. There are many dark and sad spirits hovering near the earth; it may be ours to throw light on their hidden path, and in some degree fulfill the preaching of Christ, who liberated many spirits in prison, enabling them to draw near to higher realms of being. It may be that the higher powers have allowed them to enter our atmosphere that we may lift them up. Our intention must not be a selfish one, to get all and give nothing. We should give in order to receive, receive to give more abundantly.

Jesus, without doubt, as well as his disciples, was fully alive to the fact of a real, genuine, true, practical spiritualism, and the early Christians believed in a cloud of witnesses who communed with them. The true spiritual investigator seeks not something wonderful in phenomena, desires not tests to gratify his curiosity, but from pure love of spiritual truth desires to come into relation with those by whom he can be taught that he can teach

others, be healed that he may heal others, or be consoled that he may in time console the afflicted ; he would interrogate the universe at every point, that he may become a greater benefactor of mankind. Such a state of mind as that is being *in* the spirit, in the true sense. It is a mental state, wherever he may be, that is Patmos, an isle of revelation, where like John of old, he will behold a new heaven and a new earth, and gain a vision, not only of that which is about to dawn, but which is already an actual reality, a state in which the true Messianic kingdom is established forever.

When we get back of scholastic thought, to the simple gospel of Jesus, to the good news and glad tidings, uniting Jews and Samaritans in the worship of the Father in spirit and in truth, when we learn that we can worship Him most acceptably by serving faithfully our fellow-men, when the religion of humanity is all one, when there is no more Jew or Christian, Buddhist or Mohammedan, when the religion of humanity is not a technicality, then indeed the world will be the Lamb's wife, the Holy Spouse, the Bride of Heaven, forever in communion with celestial spheres.



14

The Great Need of More Spirituality Among Spiritualists.

As the thirty-eighth anniversary of the advent of Modern Spiritualism is now close upon us, we have deemed it well to comply with the request of an esteemed friend and turn the thoughts of our present hearers to the topic of spirituality, rather than of external manifestations of spirit power; for though the latter are intensely necessary for the conversion of skeptics, and can never justly be disregarded so long as they have a mission to fulfill, — and when that mission will be over, if ever, we are not prepared to say, — no one looking at the present status of Spiritualism, both in this country and elsewhere, can possibly fail to admit, if he be an honest and intelligent observer, that there is everywhere present an insatiable desire to receive tests and witness phenomena, to see and to record something marvelous, while in many places real interest in spiritual truth is palpably lacking. Signs and wonders are always in demand, but the still, small voice of the spirit of truth entering the home, the college, the place of business, the church and lecture-hall alike, is too frequently disregarded: it certainly is not esteemed the one thing needful, which it really is; for though good is being accomplished everywhere by phenomena, though test communications are often of extreme value, though advice on business and matters pertaining to bodily health is often sorely needed, still the demands of the spiritual nature are forever superlative — for these, like the charity enjoined in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, will never cease, though the time must inevitably come when all demands of sense shall exist no more.

The study of comparative values is not pursued as it should be by the mass of mankind, and though the statement may be regarded as no compliment to Spiritualists as a body, Spiritualism does not seem to be favored with a bulk of adherents who have put mammon beneath their feet, and are content to live for spirit only; of course we do not mean to imply that earthly duties should be neglected—worldly affairs altogether disregarded. Persons are not called upon by the voice of truth to ignore every social and family obligation—even to disowning their nearest relatives, as advocated by some fanatical extremists who catch hold of a fragment of the letter, and extol that unduly, while they pay no heed to the essential spirit of the gospel; but of two evils—if we must always in this world choose between evils instead of choosing good only, even if our good be not all the good there is in the universe—that evil is surely the least which loses sight of this world in eternity rather than that which loses sight of eternity in time; if there be a life which is immortal, and another which is mortal, the immortal is surely the one most worth regarding; if there be a life beyond the grave, and that life has bearings on eternity, blind indeed are those who worship sense•forgetful of spirit, while with their own lips they confess that spirit endures eternally, while the earthly body may at any moment be cast aside.

Skepticism failing to reveal immortal life, Agnosticism leaving all spiritual questions in a realm of utter obscurity, Materialism denying immortality in so many words, and also those forms of religion which lay stress altogether upon faith, and teach a vicarious atonement as the only passport to bliss in heaven, may consistently fall short of impressing upon their devotees the need of preparing themselves by earnest philanthropic effort for blessedness immortal; if there be no life beyond, if there be no certainty of it, if nothing man can do apart from believing can influence his condition in the hereafter—though no one can be morally excused from living up to the highest

light he perceives, and in accordance with the fullest truth he knows—it is comprehensible that persons wedded to the ideas just stated should ignore to some extent the principles laid down by Spiritualism, which teaches before all things that nothing dwarfs the spirit, mars its future happiness, and binds it after the death of the body in galling chains to earth, so much as consummate worldliness; and by worldliness we do not mean a desire to innocently enjoy the pleasures of the world, or to make a comfortable, honest living for self and family, but only that grasping, purblind sensualism which is as foolish as the act of the dog in the fable, who let go the meat to grasp the magnified shadow in the water.

Spiritualists have been preaching for nearly forty years on the connection between the spiritual and material worlds; messages which if printed would extend several times around the globe, have been delivered through public and private mediums, all urging the same great fact, the need of spirituality, and still the modern world, even that portion of it which professes to believe the messages are true, continues to eat and drink, buy and sell, defraud and gamble, lie and steal, slander and back-bite, just as though all truth was merely an abstraction of the intellect, and had no possible bearing upon daily life and conduct. Intellectual abstractions are not saving truths; a mere belief benefits no one until it influences the life; to believe in Spiritualism is one thing, to live spiritually is quite another; there is plenty of the former, and too little of the latter. Spiritualists are numerous to-day in all parts of the world; a certain fashionable form of Spiritualism has been politely received in cultured circles everywhere, though sometimes under another name, but the real spirit of Spiritualism, that which is to benefit and redeem the world, even that knowledge of truth made practical which completely revolutionizes society, and sets up a novel standard of thought and action, is as yet made manifest only in the self-denying, courageous lives of a few ardent, whole-souled disciples of truth in love.

Spiritualism is, without question, a revelation, but a revelation is practically valueless unless lived up to; abstract truths may be given from pulpit, platform or through the press, but surely the world will not improve so long as the Golden Rule is only *preached*; it has always been preached in Christendom, but how much good has the preaching done without the practice? Spiritualism has been disseminated for many years in a great variety of ways, but so far it has appeared in the world more as a new doctrine concerning the future life, a new creed, a new philosophy — sometimes it has been called a new science — than as a new basis for practical endeavor. Here and there the lessons brought from spirit life have been made practical — drunkards have been reclaimed, libertines have vanquished lust; jealousy, rancor, bitterness and envy have been laid aside at the instance of a voice from “beyond the gates,” — *but* in nine cases out of every ten, we might almost say ninety-nine out of every hundred, Spiritualism has been a *belief*, and a belief *only*; therefore it has seemed to fail in its attempts to regenerate the world. It has *not* failed, and it never will; but the apparent failure is due to the prevalent supposition that to be a Spiritualist it is only necessary to believe in the truth of Spiritualism, just as many people, arguing from false premises in theology, contend that a belief in Jesus is sufficient to cleanse them from all sin.

The present interest in what is popularly known as metaphysical healing, which is only Spiritualism under another name, leads the thought of the public to that particular point where we now desire to centre your attention. It is claimed by many that a system of metaphysics can be taught so that every one possessing ordinary intelligence, taking a course of lessons and reading books and pamphlets, can heal all manner of diseases. Certain formulas are prescribed; these are learned and employed by practitioners, just as the formulæ of colleges of therapeutics can be committed to memory;

many persons, ignorant of the laws of mental action, suppose that a certain course of instruction, either paid for or received gratuitously, as the case may be, will qualify all alike for the work of healing, provided they commit the teachings to memory and say the right words when attending on a patient, either audibly or in silent mind. A system which could be thus learned by rote and committed to memory would be only a form of magic or cabalism which gives almost supreme power to incantations; that such a system does not exist in reality, is proved by the fact that some who are thoroughly familiar with the technique of metaphysics and have graduated from a metaphysical college can heal, while others cannot—they can heal some cases, but not others. Mrs. Eddy and others, who preach abstract metaphysics, would ascribe the ability of some and inability of others to various degrees of faith; but what is that mysterious something which is called faith? that is the question to be answered. It is not belief in the correctness of abstract ideas, it is surely a living, vitalizing power, which proceeds from the spirit to the spirit, and either knowingly or unknowingly to the one generating and the one perceiving it, coalesces with spiritual influences which are never far from any of us—thereby forming a connecting link between kindred minds and forging a chain of such strength and dimensions as to reach to the final point of life itself, and thereby overcome whatever is opposed to health and happiness.

A question which constantly arises in the minds of persons investigating Spiritualism, and in the minds of many old Spiritualists also, is to what extent can sittings for development, or developing circles, unfold mediumship? is not mediumistic power a natural acquisition, and does it not exist within us quite independently of any external effort to produce it? Our answer to such queries is, that mediumship is a natural endowment, something no one can create; if it could be created, hundreds would be public mediums to-day whose plaint

it is that though firm Spiritualists, and in love with mediumship, they have no mediumistic power, while others, who would rather work elsewhere, are kept much against their will in the ranks of Spiritualism. The spirit-world chooses its instruments before their birth; dowers them with such gifts as they are to exercise during their sojourn on earth; gives to some more talents than to others (viewing the matter from the standpoint of earth), but demands from none more than they are able to fulfill; every back is fitted for its burden; as the day so is the strength in every instance. The reed is bruised but never broken in life's encounter. You cannot choose your gifts, but you can utilize them, or refuse to do so. You cannot insist upon any field of labor being given to you, for appointments are not in your keeping, nor subject to your control, but you can elect either to yield gracefully and lovingly to the presence of angelic power, or you can, if so disposed, struggle to free yourselves from the arms of duty; the law can never be broken, the universe can never be changed to suit your wishes, but you can endeavor to change it, and in doing so can "kick against the pricks," and find the operation to your sorrow, but no one else's injury.

All kinds of methods have been devised for forcing mediumship; peculiar kinds of tables, planchettes, electric and galvanic batteries, magnetic passes, and a variety of other means have been and still are employed to try and force mediumship where it does not lie latent; the forcing processes are always unavailing, except in cases when the desired gift lies dormant, and where it does so, the interest excited in it tends to remove barriers which may hitherto have stood in the way of its freedom of action. In the case of the instrument who now stands before you, the law of mediumistic spontaneity was clearly illustrated, when five years of age he constantly saw his mother, whose body had been buried while he was yet an infant. Not understanding anything of spirit-life, and being but dimly conscious of the soul's immortality,

he supposed the lady who visited him at night and said she was his mother was a person yet in the material form; but so real were the visitations, and so accurate the evidence of his mother's presence, that he would give information, after enjoying communion with her, relating to family affairs of which he could not possibly have obtained any information by mundane methods. At the age of sixteen, after his mediumistic powers had lain dormant for a while, ministrations through Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond awoke the slumbering fires of inspiration, and from the day when he first listened to the voice of the spirit through her organism to the present hour, he has been a recognized instrument of spirit-power. This case is only typical — it is in no sense exceptional; you may sit in circles till "doomsday" waiting for what will never come, if you strive to mechanically create what only the spirits can inspire, *but* if there be latent gifts struggling for expression, and harmonious minds assemble to surround sensitives with the finest mental aura they can generate, results will as surely follow, not forthcoming under other circumstances.

Everything depends upon frames of mind and states of feeling, not upon chairs, and tables, and electric batteries: the latter may be of use in producing certain outward exhibitions of mental action; but spirits know little and care less about externals, unless they are still so deeply wedded to the earth that they are to all intents and purposes living yet upon the surface of the globe. There *are* ritualistic spirits, who were accustomed when on earth to employ symbols and images, who have not yet outgrown the desire for them; these often control fanciful and superstitious minds, prescribe a regalia, and attach vital importance to forms and ceremonies, but such ceremonialists are not capable of imparting any deep knowledge regarding spirit-life. We do not deny that they exist, nor that they control, communicate and manifest their presence often in ways most unmistakable; but granting the genuineness of the phenomena as such,

it only proves that those who worshiped idols upon earth cling to them in spirit until they have outgrown them, just as children may cling to their toys until they have advanced beyond them. Spirits there are who having been doctors on earth still prescribe the remedies — many of them poisonous drugs, no remedies at all — which they used while in the body. Such spirits are perfectly honest, as many M. D.'s are honest on earth to-day; but honesty is not always coupled with sufficient wisdom to entitle every honest person to be regarded as an infallible adviser or a counsellor one would do well in all things to follow.

The proof that spirits exist, and that they communicate, may be established in thousands of instances, and this fact is in and of itself of vital moment to mankind, while the wisdom of accepting a spirit's counsel because he *is* a spirit is quite another matter. From our point of view there is no more difficulty in finding what is truth when what purports to be so comes from a spirit than when it comes from a mortal — neither is there necessarily any less in both cases. We must use our own judgment, and not fall into snares for lack of keeping our eyes open. Many persons advise keeping away from Spiritualism altogether, because it is fraught with danger to investigators: why not then keep away from electricity, which is labelled dangerous; when the scientist wrote *noli me tangere* upon an electric machine, and his servant ignorantly handled it out of idle curiosity, she received a shock which sent her spinning across the floor, while her employer handled the instrument with impunity. You may refuse to have electric batteries and accumulators in your houses when children and ignorant persons are likely to be damaged by handling them, but it would be a vain task for you to petition Congress to legislate against the summer lightning, though you might ask the government officials to cause lightning rods to be affixed to your houses. There are means whereby persons can protect themselves against storms, rain, hail, sleet, wind,

heat, cold, and all the various elements and influences around them ; but though you may erect fire-proof buildings, and lock your treasures in iron safes, put furnaces in your cellars and grates in your parlors to keep out the cold, while you may render your houses water-tight, and encase yourselves in rubber garments to defy the rain, you cannot at least as yet ordain the weather, neither can you ordain the presence or absence of spiritual beings in your vicinity, but when you understand how to dispose yourselves so as to be brought into immediate contact with powers of light and benevolence, the powers of darkness can no longer hold you in their keeping.

Abstract statements, such as there is no disease, there are no evil spirits, obsession is a delusion, there is no such thing as danger or temptation, will protect no further than to the extent that certain ailments and dangers being induced by fear, the removal of dread by denial (you cannot fear what you do not recognize as having any existence) will remove the illness or save you from yielding to temptation. But ignorance and denial frequently go together. The most ignorant child or person can deny the word of any one, because he has not the least understanding of anything, and therefore not the least ground for believing in anything. Ernest Renan's beatitude, "Blessed are the blind, for they doubt nothing," is in a measure true, but surely in part satirical. It is, moreover, if intended seriously, eminently sophistical, as knowledge, not ignorance, sight, not blindness, confers every boon upon humanity. What would you think of a philanthropist who took such compassion upon humanity that he went about annihilating the functions and faculties of the human body because the senses cause so much distress ? Would you not deem him the true philanthropist who helped the world to bear its burden bravely and look away from sense to spirit ? If you listen for the harmonies of nature you will forget its discords ; if you gaze upon the sky you will forget the mud beneath your feet. If you are forever analyzing matter

and never giving a thought to spirit, is it more wonderful that spirit is not revealed to you than that those who are always bent on examining the foot do not thereby learn of the structure and convolutions of the brain ?

We invariably get what we seek, not always what we ask for in so many words, but what comes in answer to the prayer of the inmost thought and aspiration. If it be true, as the New Testament expresses it, that God does not give stones and serpents to those who ask for bread and fish, it is equally true that bread and fish are not forced upon those who pray for stones and serpents by constantly demanding only that which will augment their worldly possessions and contribute most to their standing in the eyes of the community. We do not say that there is more greed, grasping, envy, malice and other vices among Spiritualists and mediums than in other circles of society ; we do not believe there is any more, possibly not so much, but there is surely a great deal too much. If there is any, that little needs to be removed if it be but little, before the world can point to Spiritualism as the source whence true enlightenment may be expected to proceed. If it could be said of the Spiritualists and mediums of to-day, as history says it was once said of a company of early Christians, see how they love one another, more good would be accomplished, more exalted communications received in one week than could be obtained in a century of strife and ill-feeling.

We have said that spiritual influences exist, that they are around you, that you cannot put them out of existence or drive them from you in reality any more than you can put down sunshine or cause the wind to cease from blowing by legislative enactment. Still, you know that in order to derive benefit from the air or light you must open your windows and not pull down your blinds. Many a handsomely-furnished parlor in the country has almost the odor of a tomb, is damp, unhealthy, almost pestilential, because the family never use it, and almost keep the windows shut for fear the air and light should

soil the upholstery and fade the carpets. The sun has been shining, the winds have been blowing against those shuttered windows, year by year, but they have been forcibly forbidden an entrance. They were allowed to enter the kitchen, and one or two of the chambers, therefore those rooms were kept sweet and healthy ; but being barricaded out of the parlor and guest chamber, these sumptuous but most unhealthy apartments pined in suffocation and darkness, while others in the same house were alive to all the genial influences of nature.

Behold, we stand at the door and knock, the angels are ever saying to humanity ; but if no one opens the door and lets them in they will have knocked in vain, and if they do not go away their attempted visits will be of no use to you who have rejected them and kept them standing outside your closely-barred doors. The knocking has been heard ; the spirits for the past thirty-eight years have been invited to knock and knock again ; people have paid to hear them knock ; they have gladly heard their names called and had their forms described to them clairvoyantly ; but the acceptance of the outside of a letter, the mere reception of a telegram, is only an initial step to acting upon the advice contained in the letter, and doing the business to which the despatch summons you. Acknowledging as we do the value of such demonstrations of spirit-power as are given daily in all parts of the world through physical and test mediums, we will not for an instant, if we can help, convey the impression that we overlook or underrate the good accomplished by such instrumentality. But do phenomena occur only to convince you they are real ? Is there not a purpose in them beyond satisfying you of their genuineness ? If you converse with your spirit-friend at a séance every day or every week, has not that friend something to tell you, and have not you something to learn concerning life immortal ?

We do not tell you to refuse the phenomenon, only to utilize it further, and never to be content until your own

eyes are so far opened to the facts of spiritual existence that you will not feel as though you had to lean forever upon such external evidences as are limited by sense. A blind man cannot see a materialized form ; a deaf man cannot hear a lecture. Those who depend solely upon materialization, if they lose their bodily sight, have no longer the evidence of spirit-life except in memory ; neither have those who depend on the spoken word entirely, if they should lose their hearing. All auxiliaries and incentives to spiritual unfoldment are non-immortal ; they are in the vestibule, but not in the temple itself. We must pass through the porch into the inner sanctuary, but because we must go through it we are not to remain in it perpetually.

If the externalism and inadequate development of spiritual perception to which we have just alluded were the only prevailing vice of the times, we should have to cease when we had called attention to sins of omission only ; but unfortunately a far graver offence must be laid at the doors of the spiritualistic community ; that hideous sin of commission, the practice, unfortunately so rife, of going to mediums for improper purposes, to extract information concerning other people to their detriment, and the unjust advantage of the sitter, is an offence which it is a crime to condone. If ancient Israelites practiced this enormity, no wonder sorcery was denounced and laws against witchcraft instituted. This is black magic in earnest, and it is for the true Spiritualist and friend of mediums to stamp upon this monster as upon a viper which is stinging the bosom of his family. Mediumship is prostituted, and mediums ruined wherever self is extolled so that justice is lost sight of, and the rights of our common humanity trampled in the dust. Sitters are more to blame than the victims they press into their ungodly service ; but if every medium will set his face like a flint against being used for any dastardly purpose, such as making mischief between friends, creating breaches in families, and helping lawless adventurers to succeed by

infamy, such an acquisition of power will be brought to the conscientious medium that for every sitter lost, by following a righteous course, five will be attracted by the higher influences who will work for the faithful medium ; and even should earthly gains be less, the Spiritualist, and above all others, the medium, should, with the light vouchsafed to him, learn to estimate the fleeting shams of time and the unrealities of sense with the glorious realities of spirit, so as to realize that every dollar thus lost through honesty is so much invested in the bank of heaven, while every cent obtained by fraud, or countenancing wrong, can, in the long run, only buy a stone to hold the spirit down to earth when otherwise it might be free to soar to joys eternal.

In closing, let us urge on every Spiritualist, and every medium who values honor, and wishes prosperity to the cause of truth, to regard slander as a capital offence. Never run down one another, never fail to give to all their dues. No one can possibly be your rival, as no one but yourself can do your work, and you can do the work of none other. The vineyard is spacious, and in comparison with the work to be accomplished the laborers are very few. Your only road to success is to help on others ; you only clog your own chariot wheels by attempting to retard the progress of another. Charity is, after all, the best of gifts, the greatest of all spiritual endowments. Having this, we may add a thousand precious gems to our coronet ; but if this central gem be lacking, the crown itself will be but tinsel, and fall to pieces when most we long to wear it.

JESUS OF NAZARETH;

Was he the Promised Messiah, King of the Jews, or only a Carpenter's Son?

THE controversy now waging, not only in Boston but all over the civilized world, concerning the true position of Jesus among the moral and spiritual teachers who have arisen among men, is a contest which no amount of merely external scholarship can ever finally decide, since the question of what constitutes a genuine Messiah and the kindred inquiry, what is the true rendering of the spirit of Messianic predictions, lead us to the verge of such profound and deep-seated spiritual problems that to solve them perfectly requires an amount of spiritual illumination vouchsafed to but very few.

Rev. Solomon Schindler, of Temple Adath Israel in this city, has given of late some historical discourses bearing on the Messianic idea, in which he has given utterance to ideas, which have greatly disturbed the equanimity of the orthodox, both in the Jewish and Christian communities of this and other countries. Dr. Schindler's position becomes formidable in that it is not his own simply, but, in the main, is a correct representation of the ultra-reformed Hebrew sentiment of the age; and this sentiment is unfortunately for all phases of conservatism a steadily and rapidly growing one.

When Moses Mendelssohn first started the Jewish reform in Germany in the last century, there were no visible indications that the reform movement would go any further than to the point of Europeanizing Judaism. Many of the most learned rabbis of Germany have long since endeavored to strip the Hebrew religion of its extremely oriental character. They did not realize, per-

haps, how far their successors would be led to depart from all the ancient conventionalities of Judaism, if they followed in the steps of the very moderate reformers who set the ball of reform rolling; but it has been evident to all far-seeing intellects, not immediately engaged in the strife and not occupying places within the arena of conflict, that no half measures can last long, though at a given moment they may be the most thorough and sweeping that can possibly be devised.

Either Judaism is to retain its oriental character, and the Jews are to constitute an Asiatic nation, or Judaism is to be in future simply a religion, and the Jews, a body of religionists claiming no distinctive nationality, and by mingling freely with modern nations, become simply a leavening element in the concrete nations of the future. Only the most orthodox and old-fashioned of the Hebrews entertain much hope to-day of going to Palestine and there becoming a great political as well as religious power. In this country strictly orthodox Jewish societies are few and far between, and these are almost wholly made up of Poles and other foreigners. In England, orthodox Judaism has more numerous adherents, but reformatory measures and liberal views are gradually overturning the ancient ceremonies and superstitions, the world over.

Reformed Judaism, as it now stands, is a compromise; it is an indication of the working of the spirit of the times; it is a result of education, travel and increasing liberality of sentiment; but in the radical reform movement there are many imperfect and unsatisfying elements, and none are more so than those which are persistently brought to the front by lecturers of great ability and high intellectual culture but of little spiritual insight. In their fear lest they be superstitious, they go to the opposite extreme of flagrant and boastful denial of every thing that cannot be comprehended by human reason in its present state of unfoldment, and, in so doing, while they are earnestly anxious to purge religion of all dross

and purify the temple of all idols, their teaching has a manifest tendency to cut the ground from under all spiritual fact and phenomena. There is too much reason and too little intuition; too much intellect and too little spiritual perception in all such leaders of modern thought; their minds need to get married to their souls, their intellects to their intuitions; and then they will see, that granting the justice of their premises and the correctness of their canon of interpretation, there is ample room for a totally different view of the Messianic question from that taken by most of them.

Now we are not attempting to accuse Dr. Schindler, Dr. Köhler or any of the ultra-reformed Jewish rabbis of to-day, of misquoting history or in any way misrepresenting the state of the world two thousand years ago. It is a matter of history susceptible of proof that the Jews were under the heel of the Roman oppressor in the year 1 of the present era. It is equally true that the prevalent idea of the Messiah was that he should be a man of war, not a man of peace; that his kingdom should be temporal, not spiritual; and it is further true that Bar Kochba, who appeared more than a century after Jesus, did fulfil the expectations of the great mass of Jews who were looking for a warrior Messiah; but all these historical facts, and hundreds of others in keeping with them, do not in any way prove that these expectations were in accord with the spirit of ancient prophecy or that the mistake of literalizing scripture was not a very grievous one, resulting in the most direful consequences to the Israelites.

Perhaps if the people had been looking for one who should not strive nor cry, nor lift up his voice in the streets, instead of one who should head a mighty army, they would have so far followed the counsels of the meek and lowly prophet of Nazareth as to have developed within themselves such true greatness as would have lifted them out of bondage into liberty by sheer force of superior morality. In the struggle for ascendancy, yea,

even for survival, races are compelled not only to keep pace with the mental and moral progress of the race, but to so far transcend the average attainment as to live when others die and rule when others are ruined.

In human nature as it is now presented to the world there are decidedly conflicting and irreconcilable elements perpetually warring one against the others. These discordances do not originate in the nature of things with reference to the eternal constitution of the universe, but are related wholly and solely to incipient stages of development or growth. No hope of material aggrandizement, no desire on the part of some to be before others in the divine favor, and in the estimation of their fellows, can be more than an accident of a temporal, evanescent condition of human progress. Every nation suffers, as it desires to control others; every form of tyranny and oppression recoils sooner or later upon the tyrannical oppressor; and we have only to consult the pages of history to see how, one after another, all the nations of the old world have gone down, for no other reason than because of their lawless and unwarrantable ambition. No nation and no individual can ever work in destructive currents of thought, or use either the sword of will or material weapons to accomplish his own success at the expense of another's downfall, without experiencing the truth of the prophetic phrases, "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," and, "They who take the sword, shall perish by the sword." Such passages as these, by gross and grievous misinterpretations in which the spirit has been entirely lost sight of, have been made the foundation for the atrocious barbarity of capital punishment, and many persons have persuaded themselves that their own cruel and ambitious acts of violence have been acceptable to God and the only means whereby the Eternal punished his erring children. Such barbarisms, put forward in the name of civilization and religion, have done more than all other malific agencies combined to destroy nations and indi-

viduals, and have succeeded in bringing about those awful crises and oft-recurring devastations which have almost justified the conclusion that the devil was let loose upon the earth and playing just the havoc he pleased with God's children. Indeed fanaticism has in many instances run so high in professed religious circles that a large portion of the human family have been regarded as in no sense objects of God's care, but wholly given over to perdition, preordained to destruction, if not to damnation.

Jewish history proves pretty conclusively that the horrid falsities of Mohammedanism and Calvinism had a root in the old Hebrew faith; not indeed in the sublime inspirations of Isaiah, nor in the first chapter of Genesis, in which we are informed that God was the sole creator and pronounced everything "very good;" but in the prevalent traditions of the people; these traditions being a superincumbent mass of error, overlying the foundations of religion, which Jesus said made "the word of God of none effect," to those who reveled in these false beliefs which were but mists rising from the ground, shadows cast by self-love and desire for individual and racial supremacy. These earthly promptings, always antagonizing the divine light of truth, so far obscured the vision of the people that they worshipped matter instead of God; bowed down to idols and forgot the spiritual Jehovah whom no fleshly faculty could discern and whose form was unknown and unknowable to sense. Thus the second commandment of the Decalogue forbids any likeness or image of the Eternal; even the name of the Eternal was not pronounced, as no outward speech can give form to the thought of eternity.

Human and animal sacrifices were all results of moral and mental darkness and received no sanction whatever from the spiritually enlightened prophets against whom the multitude rose up in rebellious insubordination. David, in his highest moments of exalted inspiration, declares that rams and bullocks offered in sacrifice to God

are of no avail to avert the anger or win the approval of the Supreme, "The sacrifices of God," says he, "are a broken and a contrite spirit;" this is the only offering, the sole sacrifice for sin that God requires at the hands of his children. Further back in the Old Testament we are told of Abraham's partial enlightenment when an angel told him not to kill his son Isaac; but Abraham had not then reached that point in spiritual attainment where he could dispense with outward sacrifices altogether, so seeing a ram caught in a thicket he killed the ram and saved his son's life. This act of Abraham's was a step forward; it marked an epoch in his career when he turned away from the matchless atrocity of human sacrifice and substituted animal sacrifice in its stead; but this change did not reach the summit on which Micah stood when he lifted up his voice and cried against every other sacrifice than that offered perpetually by the truly righteous who are none other than those who are just and merciful to their fellows and walk humbly with their God.

No one can read the Old Testament thoughtfully, if the dust of theological prejudice has not completely blinded his eyes, without seeing how utterly at variance were the two contending schools of Spiritualism and Materialism in ancient Judaism. The spiritualistic party always trusted in purity of motive and honesty of conduct as their only passports to divine favor; while the materialistic element always relied upon bloody rites and infamous massacres as means of appeasing the imaginary anger of the Supreme Being.

Jesus appeared on earth at a time when the Jewish nation had followed materialism so far that spirituality had well-nigh died out of the hearts and hopes of the people. Truly the mass of Jews were loyal to the ceremonies of their religion and were enthusiastically patriotic in an external and worldly sense. They detested the Roman usurper and had towards the Roman governors much the same feelings that animate the Irish land

leaguers to-day to insurrection against England ; for this we cannot blame them, neither should we condemn them. We cannot blame Mr. Parnell's followers for their hatred of English oppression ; but while we can most heartily sympathize with an oppressed and downtrodden people in any age or part of the world, we can never endorse, as wise or likely to be ultimately successful, any course which results from the suicidal policy of fighting evil with evil weapons. Jesus was pre-eminently scientific and philosophical as well as moral when he commanded all who would walk in his footsteps not to try to put down wrong by wrong. The weapons of the oppressor as evil could only be overcome by good ; and "overcome evil by good" is as sound a maxim as "extinguish fire by water."

Dr. Wise of Cincinnati, President of the Hebrew college, a man of great ability and erudition, has in our opinion dealt more justly and liberally with the Messianic controversy than any other representative combatant in the field, whose works we have perused. In his writings there is not a trace of prejudice or bitterness against Jesus, and no attempt is made to justify or gloss over the crime perpetrated by those unworthy Jews who united with the Romans in putting him to death. As Dr. Gordon of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church in this city has recently preached a vigorous sermon in opposition to the position taken by Dr Schindler, and as the subject has been well ventilated in all the newspapers which have given copious extracts and sometimes entire reports of the sermons, we feel it to be a duty we owe our own society and those who read our printed lectures to endeavor to show you where our philosophy steps in and explains the Messianic idea and demonstrates, as we consider, clearly the part played by both Jew and Roman in the martyrdom of Jesus.

Dr. Gordon, as is usual with ministers of the old school of theology, goes to the Bible, hurls text after text at the heads of all who oppose his deductions, and

then assumes the attitude of one who has discharged such a volley of heavenly artillery into the camp of the enemy that every would-be opposer must henceforward confess himself tamed into involuntary, if not voluntary, subjection. The psychology of the pulpit is a great study; the mesmeric influence of the platform weighs mightily with the audience. An array of glittering texts strung together, each one wrenched from its context and made to do duty as a support to a foregone and most dogmatic conclusion, and all these texts unitedly put forward as an infallible word of God, to doubt which is to imperil the eternal welfare of the human soul, must constitute an awful avalanche of apparent truths which, when sweeping down in a fiery torrent of burning thought and determined will upon a passive audience, occasions that psychological sequence in many instances which revivalists call the descent of the Holy Ghost. Hearts are "changed" only by suffering from paralysis of thought occasioned by fear; brains are weakened and not strengthened by the action of the "believe or be damned" doctrine. Dr. Gordon and all like him are weakening the mental capacities of their hearers by threatening them into belief in theological inferences which every individual should be left free to draw for himself. Dr. Schindler on the other hand, is liberating the human mind; and while he and his colleagues may not yet have entered into an intuitive perception of the spiritual truth veiled externally in the history of the Messianic idea, they leave the way open for all to investigate fully into everything, without fearing the wrath of Jehovah, if they use the reason God has given them.

Dr. Schindler's assertions concerning the reasonableness of Judaism, its distinguishing rationality, the Jew being a natural rationalist, rationalism personified, are most true when applied to a large section of Jews, especially German and American Jews; but they would hardly apply to those whom Dr. Gordon uses as a support to his theology; poor unhappy creatures who wail in

Jerusalem every Friday before sunset, they certainly would not apply to the illiterate Polish Jews who have been ground down for centuries in Europe, owing to the dominance there of opinions concerning them as Christ-Killers which orthodox Christianity has through all the centuries done everything to encourage and nothing to condemn.

The liberal churches of New England have done so much to modify the reign of old theology that every denomination in Boston is tinctured with the leaven of more progressive thought, and though many will not acknowledge the source whence they have received light, it has nevertheless shone from the centres of heterodoxy so brightly that in a city like this and on a day like this, we are not capable of estimating very correctly the condition of the Jews under the reign of terror which orthodoxy established and held in force for over fifteen centuries. This so-called Christianity was nothing but a great apostacy; but the germ of the religion of love was only hidden; nothing could remove it or destroy it; the immortal seed of truth lived in spite of all attempts to crush it out of being, and it blossomed too in many a pure and loving heart so that among the prelates and doctors of the church and among civil rulers and legislators also we find bright examples of the spirit of the Master.

Jesus was no hierarchist; he established no outward organization to be called the kingdom of heaven; his kingdom was spiritual; a divine theocracy was his idea of government, and the theocratic idea, divested of anthropomorphic and monarchical accretions, resolves itself into nothing else than government by morality and mind, to the setting aside of every carnal weapon and the utter destruction of all practices of cruelty.

Judaism in its worst features made a compromise with Paganism in the days of Paul or soon after, and then this pair, wedded in the name of ambition and in the overweening desire for self-aggrandizement, began to give birth to a haughty, overbearing system of ecclesiastical

despotism which endeavored to strangle the true faith by subordinating it to selfish aims and ambitions. Thus the cross, the instrument of torture, was venerated, and the words, "in hoc signo vinces," "in this sign thou shalt conquer," meant that victory was to be won by the sword, by brute force, by all manner of carnal weapons. Thus was there a wall built up around the hearts of men to keep the Saviour out, and in those temples where the effigy of his death was most conspicuously displayed, the power of his resurrection was felt the least.

No church can ever deceive the spiritually awakened into a belief that it is the church of truth, unless in all its methods it follows the golden rule given by him who says mystically when speaking as the representative of God in man, "I am the truth," "no man cometh unto the Father but by me," words which have been interpreted in every way except the right way by those who could not or would not see that the divine demonstration of the absolute, all-conquering power of truth recorded in the four evangels, must be the test of truthful living in all churches and communities till time shall be no more.

In the days of Jesus the Jews were just where the Christians for the most part are now with regard to all great questions of ethics, government and morality; they believed in standing armies, splendidly equipped fleets, magnificent reservoirs of destructive force of any and every kind; if they did not possess all these things they longed for them, they coveted the weapons of the Romans and they longed to fight Cæsar with Cæsar's own weapons. Jesus was born to interpret the spirit of the prophets and the law and to offer salvation to his countrymen, not vicariously but through the demonstration of spiritual truth in their presence with the object of leading them to forsake the lower and cultivate the higher love.

We do not for a moment even hint at the idea that similar spiritual demonstrations had not been given to the world previously by others; we do not wish to over-

estimate any or underestimate any; but Jesus was the central figure in his day among those spiritual teachers and workers in Israel, who, while detesting and utterly abandoning Kabalistic sorcery, acknowledged and employed every spiritual gift ever claimed by Kabalist or wizard, while necromancers abused such gifts.

In order to understand the true relation of Jesus to his age, we must contemplate him in the light of a great physician born to heal a desperate case which no lesser influence than that working through him could reach. That none may mistake our meaning, we will indulge in a single illustration. A man is sick unto death; a great many doctors have attended him; of them there were many who could make a perfect diagnosis and who thoroughly understood the value of the only remedy which could possibly restore him to health; the patient spurns the remedy, insists upon being dosed by poisons and becomes worse and worse; the physicians, one by one, leave his bedside in indignation and sorrow; at length one more eminent than all his predecessors comes in; the case is now in so critical a state that only by instant application of the most powerful remedy in the world, can the patient recover; the physician urges him to take it, suffers with him in the intensity of his sympathy; but the patient kicks him out, insults him for his pains, and the good, kind doctor goes out of the city where the ungrateful man is dying of the most dreadful disorder, and weeps, and that copiously, not for himself, but for the poor, misguided wretch and his descendants. In this illustration you have our conception, very poorly and feebly conveyed, of the Israelitish nation; the nation is the sufferer who refuses to be healed, the several physicians are the prophets who were rejected, the physician who came last and was cast out was Jesus; He who wept on the mount of Olives, was no believer in vicarious atonement, he offers health, peace, rest, every blessing; but offers it only by teaching how it may be acquired, he points to no substitutionary work on humanity's behalf, he tells no patient he can

take his medicine for him, but he does offer the remedy to the sick; but as their own faith must heal them, if they refuse to be healed they must perish of their sickness. One of the most singular facts in human experience is that many people do love darkness rather than light. This seems incredible at first, since light is so beautiful that we are all, when in a healthy state, enamored of its charms; but the reason why darkness is courted is plain enough: darkness hides evil and light reveals it.

Many persons who are ill, suffering tortures, absolutely refuse to be made whole, and steel themselves resolutely against the means of physical salvation. Why? Because the means of cure involves the abandoning of vicious practices and self-indulgences which have created, fixed, and perpetuated the malady.

Insanity, with all its horrors, is endured by many rather than its antidote which is to refrain from passion and all that inflames to desperation. The rejection of Christ by Israel is a study with many parallels in ancient and modern history, and as the bulk of the people did not reject him, but only the chief priests and rulers, we are unfair and untruthful if we condemn the Jew because he was the victim of an unprincipled set of dastardly representatives, unworthy of the name of Jew. We all know enough about politicians and diplomatists to have a doubtful appreciation of their morals; bribery, corruption, rings, are words too often applicable to their manœuvres to let one think of them as an immaculate set of men who are so good and pure that they are elected by the community in the way in which Henry Bulwer said the Coming Race would elect its representatives. Two thousand years ago do you think there were no political demagogues? Two thousand years ago do you imagine there were no illiterate masses to be hoodwinked into connivance with every conceivable crime which the ring-leaders, who wanted to feather their nests by stripping the plumage from the silly birds who allowed themselves to be fleeced by pretended friends who were ~~really~~ *really* their enemies, might commend?

The common people were led any way their rulers choose to lead them ; witness the fickle crowd who cried out " Hosanna " on Palm Sunday, and " Crucify him " on the following Friday. There is a mob everywhere which yields to the caprice of the hour and obeys the mesmeric mandate of any who are for the moment in the ascendant. This mob whose voice is often called the voice of God is only the parrot echo of any voice which is raised higher than others at the moment. The poor, infatuated Jewish populace was torn to pieces between the rending influences brought to bear upon them by their priests and rulers. Those rulers undoubtedly stirred up the people to hoot at Jesus and demand his death and the release of Barabbas, because these rulers seeing the turn affairs were taking and the extent to which their own interests with Rome were imperiled if the people under them should engage in a revolt against Cæsar, and being utterly blinded by their own mercenariness, could not in any way understand the metaphysical doctrine of Jesus, and, as they held appointments under the Roman power and were obliged to keep in favor with it so as to retain their offices and receive their highly-prized emoluments, they had Jesus put to death under pretext that he was a seditionist and an enemy to Cæsar, and by so doing made their own position the stronger.

Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee, was a Jew ; Pontius Pilate, a Roman. Herod and Pilate became friends when Herod delivered Jesus into Pilate's hands. Can any one fail to see the political manœuverer whom Jesus spoke of as a fox slyly working to advance his own interests ? It was dangerous to him to be at variance with the Roman governor ; what did he care for truth, justice, mercy, honor or anything of the kind ? He ordered John the Baptist to be beheaded in order to please the mother of a girl who fascinated him by her dancing, and he was in all respects the type of a sordid, self-seeking man ; very cunning and crafty, able to set deep plots and

cover up his wiles, one whom we could thoroughly believe was capable of sacrificing conscience to that form of diplomatic expediency which would most readily promote his own lawless love of power.

Pontius Pilate was another of the same ilk ; he knew the truth, and lived a lie ; he had received from his own wife enough spiritual truth to dissuade him from sullyng his hands with the blood of an innocent man ; he hypocritically washed his hands of the whole affair and yet at the same time was one of its instigators and a prime mover in it. This man asks of Jesus, "What is Truth?" and is met with dignified silence ; he wanted to learn the formulas of truth that he might employ them in deceiving others, and Jesus refused him as a student ; no doubt he was secretly if not openly enraged at the contempt shown by Jesus for those who could do whatever they liked with him so far as earthly authority was concerned. The rulers from that moment added personal pique to political interests and quickly compassed the pathway of Jesus to Calvary.

History gives poor and meagre information, and allows us no rock of incontrovertible fact on which to stand when arguing out the reasons why the Christ was condemned to death ; but enough is said to throw light on the omissions. Human nature is so much like what the glimpses we can catch of it through the gospels make it appear to have been two thousand years ago, that, in the light of modern knowledge of what the emotions of politicians really are, and in the light of all older history, we can easily perceive how identical were the states of mind which led the Athenian rulers to condemn Socrates and those of Judea to condemn Jesus.

Was Jesus the Messiah? There is the question. Yes he was ; in this sense, that the Messiah is Truth, and whoever embodies and expresses truth more fully than another is a Messiah. The original idea of a Messiah is not of a man. The primal government of Israel was a theocracy ; a monarchy marked a descent into externals.

But shall we bow before a person? Shall we bend the knee before the Carpenter's Son of Nazareth, and confess him King of kings and Lord of lords? Only in so far as you behold in Him the universal truth made manifest; no further. The redemption Jesus proclaimed to Israel was not through the acceptance of a person, but through the acceptance of the moral law. In none of his teachings does he do other than point out the way, the truth and the life for others to accept. He became so thoroughly identified with God that he was in truth one with God, but he never declares that any child of the Eternal is debarred from participating in the same divine privileges as he himself enjoyed.

The rejection of truth, the rejection of love, the giving up to lower passions and baser emotions, the yielding to political demagoguism, the failure to accept the only true salvation,—viz., the abandonment of error and the establishment of righteousness, constituted the rejection of the Messiah, in every land wherever ruins testify to the passing away one by one of all the great empires of the past.

The gospel histories are not perfect; they were not written at the time when the events transpired, and therefore there are many inconsistencies to be met with in them; but though written by his followers and that by no means immediately after his ceasing to reveal his presence through a guise of flesh to his disciples, they are sufficiently lucid and ample to more than prove all we have endeavored to establish in this lecture. It will require a series of discourses on Jesus and his teachings to set forward in any adequate degree our views upon the principles he lived and suffered to proclaim. In our next address, we shall speak more upon the spiritual essence of his teachings and less upon the merely literal and historical side of the question; but before we close this evening, we must implore you to turn a deaf ear to all the attempts which are now being made on every hand by rationalists who display little, if any, spiritual

perception when dealing with such questions, to relegate all miracles to the realm of collusion and superstition.

Become workers of miracles yourselves, seek for and obtain—and you can if you will—that conquest over sense that will enable you to prove to the scoffer and the materialist that there are spiritual laws in obedience to which the performance of a miracle takes place as naturally as matter is dissolved and floats off into the ether in the laboratory of the modern chemist. Work for and obtain those surpassing demonstrations of mind over matter which Jesus said all his followers should receive wherewith to convince the world of the great reality of spirit.

Spiritualists, Theosophists, Metaphysicians, or rather persons assuming these names and discrediting their profession by their practice, are often found trusting in everything but Mind, everything but Spirit, to enable them to succeed in life and vanquish obstacles. It is not mere intellectual assent to a doctrine or a formula that will save from national or individual downfall; on the contrary, belief in persons, spirits, creeds and books, must all go for naught, without indwelling righteousness. The practical application of the Sermon on the Mount is what we need; not a mere belief in its divine origin. No one knows, and we are sure we do not care, how old its teachings are, or when or where they were first delivered to mankind. The *Pater Noster*, if compiled by Hillel, is just as good as though compiled by Jesus. Truth ignores personalities as its foundation; its base of operation is never belief in doubtful history, but always in realization of the living presence of the divine in man. As none can doubt that Cicero and Demosthenes were masters of oratory, Angelo greater than his contemporaries as an architect, Raphael pre-eminent as a painter, Beethoven matchless as a musical composer, so in the line of spiritual teachers, which commences far back in pre-historic antiquity, there have been some who have stood above others as the mountains above the valleys.

There is one Alp first kissed by day at sunrise every morning; there is one Himalayan peak twenty-nine thousand feet above the level of the sea, the highest spot of ground on earth which must have most of day and least of night; and so, in human lives, if one stands higher than the rest in spiritual attainment at any epoch in earth's history, that one is he to whom others look to view the rising sun and catch the first bright glimpse of morning light which ere long will leave that mountain no longer solitary, but will stream down even into the lowest valley, till all places upon earth shall sing praises to the god of day. Let us see that we do not refuse the voice of our indwelling Messiah: let us be careful lest, in too earnest search after doubtful good, we grieve the spirit of truth within us and thus incur the penalty which follows rejection of the one and only light by which we can eternally see clearly.

To condemn the Jew, to glory in Christian missions and hug the delusion that salvation consists in belief in dogma, is to crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. Jesus on the cross declared that his enemies were ignorant, and the people who put him to death were the objects of his pity. He asked God to forgive them, and with all due respect to Dr. Gordon, we prefer to worship the God whom Jesus prayed to on the cross, than the relentless being who neither heard nor answered the Master's prayer, for if for near 2000 years all Israel's sons and daughters have been under the curse of God for crucifying Jesus, then God refused to answer his beloved son's dying petition; on the horn of that dilemma orthodox christianity has placed itself.

JESUS OF NAZARETH;

he the Promised Messiah, King of the Jews, or only a Carpenter's Son?

PART 2.

our last discourse on Jesus of Nazareth, we entered so to clear the ground in the discussion of the anic idea, as to make it appear that, of the two diametrically opposing opinions now as formerly current concerning a Messiah, the one which is the most spiritual and the older, the more rational and enduring. We no doubt failed to satisfy both the ultra-radical and ultra-conservative; such a failure can occasion us neither dissatisfaction nor surprise, as our motto has always been that truth lies between extremes; that extremes are always dangerous, and that we are never so wise as when in all controversy we attain what is commonly known as a happy medium, or wise middle course. One extreme of thought invariably produces another; as pendulum, having oscillated excessively one way, is afterwards after a little to oscillate with equal force the other way.

So it is with the ever-controverted question, "What is the true position of Jesus of Nazareth among the Jewish teachers?" Was he God or man, or both? Was he a teacher sent from God, or a visionary, a wild enthusiast, or, as some have ventured to affirm, a lunatic or an impostor?

The gospels themselves show that when they were written, which was probably not till three or four hundred years after Christ, there were many discordant views concerning Jesus. He is reported to have asked of his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the son of man, am?"

According to the text of that question, he declares himself to be the son of man, and that is all ; and the answer comes from the disciple who replies to the master's interrogatory, "Some say Elias ; some, Jeremiah ; and some, one of the other prophets." Then comes another question, addressed by Jesus to Peter, "But whom sayest thou that I am?" and Peter answers, "Thou art the Christ (anointed one), son of the living God." Jesus seems to highly approve of this reply, and says to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona ; flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven."

Such a statement made by Jesus implies to many minds that he claimed to be the eternal, sole-begotten son of the Infinite, God of God, Light of Light, very God of God, as the Nicene creed expresses it ; but any one, knowing in what sense the term, "son of God," was constantly used in ancient days in the eastern part of the world, would never, unless blinded by theological prejudice, suppose for a single instant that it meant any more than a highly illuminated mind, a genuine and inspired prophet. In one of the gospels, Jesus himself explains the term "god" as well as "son of God," in perfect accordance with our views of ancient eastern terminology ; for does he not say, they were called gods on whom the spirit of God came ? Judaism, being a rigid monotheistic system, has always sternly denounced and thoroughly repudiated polytheism, and in so doing has done well ; but an extreme position of denial is often a most mistaken one, for though the practices and beliefs denied may relate to errors, the only successful way of exterminating error is by revealing the facts concerning which prevailing errors are misconceptions. Because we do not worship animals or even men, we are not called upon to deny their existence ; neither are we in the right when we deny to the members of the Pantheon their place in the spiritual universe as something more than mental abstractions and phantasies, because we refuse supreme

worship to all beside the Eternal whose voice we hear with utmost distinctness in the deepest silence of our own inmost being.

There are three terms used constantly in the old Testament which scholastically speaking are not by any means interchangeable, though frequently interchanged; more often, however, in commentaries and in sermons than in the text of the Bible itself. These first, are GOD, meaning the Eternal Being, the only one who is placed before Israel as the object of supreme adoration. "The Eternal thy God" is a phrase constantly occurring in the Massoretic text; but unfortunately in most Christian translations, the far less expressive word, "Lord," is substituted for Eternal. In the beginning of Genesis we are told of the Eternal and the Spirit of the Eternal. Later on we come to the Lord God, a compound name signifying, as can easily be ascertained by reference to the Kabala, not the Almighty, but a very highly exalted potentate in the spiritual realm under whose direction the work of creation or evolution is carried on. This being is the highest who can be apprehended by the finite thought of man, as having such limitations as permit the thought of personality. The Eternal should not be considered as impersonal, as that would to most minds rob the thought of Deity of all that makes it really great. There is so much in the association of ideas that, as we constantly use the word impersonal to designate the inanimate, the unconscious things inferior to ourselves, if we apply it to Deity, we think ourselves very near to the borders of atheism, inasmuch as an impersonal force or energy naturally conveys to the mind an idea of anything but superiority to all human attributes, elements, and affections.

Now if we adopt super-personal as the most applicable term that we in our ignorance can apply to the Supreme Being, we shall at once suggest to our own and other minds the thought of the infinitely superior. GOD will then mean for us the eternal energy which is vastly more

wise, loving, conscious, intelligent, just and true than ourselves; and the only reason restraining us from calling the Infinite a person, will be our acknowledgment that, as all personality, as we understand it, is limited, the unlimited must exist in a life beyond our comprehension; as a mere truism declares that the infinite can never be fully comprehended by the finite. Spiritual apprehension, but never mental comprehension, will reveal the Eternal to his children; and as all revelation is in reality but discovery, we must ever keep clearly in mind the idea that Jesus, like the Bible, only marks a certain stage in God's revelations to his children, even though he be the promised Messiah so far as a Messiah can ever mean simply a person; the best of men must still be regarded as only one out of an infinitude of divine spectacles shown by the Infinite to humanity.

The third term used is god or lord, which means only a ruler, either on earth or in the spirit world; and we must no more bow in prostrate homage before every utterance of a man or spirit called a lord, or god, in the Bible, than we bow in abject submission to every member of the upper house of the English Parliament, because all its members are lords, and not commons, in a technical and aristocratic sense. There can be no doubt that Jesus, as well as all the Hebrew prophets who antedated him, sanctioned and encouraged the prevalent belief of his countrymen in the existence of many spirits and grades of spirits in the universe. He did not deny that unclean spirits took possession of the minds and bodies of men and women; but because he accepted their existence and influence, he asked no one to yield to them, but rather to resist them; he himself cast them out and also directed his followers to do so.

Demonology was an ancient science; we may say even an exact science to some extent, and demon was only the Greek term for spirit. Socrates, we are told, was constantly attended by a guardian spirit whom few would hesitate to call an angel, so good and wise were

the counsels the demon gave. The spirit, nevertheless, in philosophic language, was a demon, not a devil by any means, as a demon was never called a devil or an evil one, unless manifesting attributes of evil. Jesus did not cast out all demons, but we are especially told in the New Testament that unclean demons were the ones he drove out of the poor maniacs and sufferers of all kinds whom he cured. Not to yield to every spirit, but to try the spirits, was the injunction of the leaders of the early Christian church before its corruption. The corruption unfortunately began very soon after its institution. The establishment of Christianity, in and of itself, was a reformatory movement, but, like all reforms, it failed to reform every abuse, and allowed to creep into itself many of the very errors which it was the intention of its original founders to stamp out, root and branch.

History is very silent, or at least ambiguous, concerning Jesus. The mention of him by contemporaries is slight and doubtful; it is indeed a most difficult, and, we may add, thankless task, to endeavor to prove, on purely historical grounds, that such a man as the Carpenter's Son of Nazareth ever really existed. Still, setting aside all but incontrovertible testimony to the fact of his existence, there is an immense probability that he lived; and even if he did not, it is plain that at nearly the same time when he is said to have lived, somebody lived, and gave rise to the story of his miraculous career.

Mere verbal quibbles as to a name can settle nothing. There is at present an "Apollonius of Tyana craze," which has taken possession of the minds of many who, feeling the necessity of acknowledging a personal centre to the group of characters which influenced the first century of the present era so largely, have turned to this remarkable and learned man as the original of Jesus of Nazareth. History does not justify the assumption that Jesus was Apollonius, as Apollonius is reported to have lived over eighty years (some citations could be furnished

from historical sources to prove that he lived to the age of ninety, and even one hundred years), and to have died peacefully. He was not a martyr, his end was not tragic; while Jesus, a young man, whose ministry is said to have extended only about three years (though some of the fathers prolonged it to twenty, all agreeing, however, that his end was tragic), could not have been invented out of the record of Apollonius the theurgist.

The astronomical or mythical theory has more foundation than this, as from times immemorial the sun and twelve zodiacal signs have been venerated as emblems of the divine soul and its passage through the twelve degrees of development necessary to its perfect conquest over sense. But the astronomical religionists of Egypt, India, Chaldea, Persia, and other ancient climes, have all admitted in the purity of their systems that the soul or divine life, the highest principle within man, is made manifest in avatars, or teachers of mankind, distinguished for their abundant spirituality more than in ordinary human beings. There has always, therefore, been a human, as well as an astronomical element in the mythos. Chrishnu and Buddha are indeed terms inapplicable to a single human personality, but they are applicable, in a sense, to those who have attained to the spiritual degrees which the names signify. Buddha means enlightened or illumined. God in man is the enlightener and illuminator of all who live, but none can deny that the divine *atma* or *ego* is far more fully revealed in some lives than in others. The doctrine of successive incarnations of Vishnu, nine having been already computed, while a tenth is expected, may not be accepted literally by the rationalistic German or American reformer; still, the idea, in a modified and somewhat material form, is entertained by even the most sceptical. Vishnu means preserver; and who will deny that those who are, in a special sense, embodiments of virtue, are in truth the preservers of society? None will refuse to style them "the salt of the earth." Because Jesus was not the only

embodiment of purity the world has ever seen ; because the story of his life is told in language similar to that telling the tale of Osiris, the Egyptian sun god of many thousand years before his time ; because his birth is celebrated on the twenty-fifth of December, an astronomical festival borrowed by Christianity from archaic religions, we need not set aside the simple story, so natural in its details, of there having arisen in Judea, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, a man who led a party of followers into newness of thought and life, and whose influence, so far as it extended, directed faith and attention away from cold formalities to living spirituality.

Jesus was a Jew, faithful to the religion of his fathers, as Socrates was faithful to the religion of Greece. The Athenian Sage must quaff the fatal hemlock for no other sin against his countrymen than that of speaking truth too freely. Socrates protested against the despotism of Grecian rulers ; he denied the right of an Athenian cult to a monopoly of learning ; he preached to the masses as well as to the few, and stripped from the divinities the mask of fable, behind which the priesthood had so long concealed the ideas and facts which their life histories were originally intended to symbolize. Savonarola, at a later day, in Italy, longed to liberate his countrymen from the yoke of Roman bondage, which the Vatican made to press so heavily upon the necks of all within the church. He was no agitator, no seditionist, but on the contrary, a man of peace ; he wished only to reform, not to destroy ; the fighting came not from him, but from those who held possession of lucrative offices, their hold upon which would have ceased, had the good reformer been successful in purging the church of its abuses. Luther touched the most sensitive chord in the breasts of his opponents when he cried out against the traffic in indulgences which three or four hundred years ago was all over Europe a source of immense revenue, both to prelates and nobles, for the ecclesiastical and civil powers had formed an unholy alliance to plunder the people and divide the spoils.

The old cry raised by the silversmith of Ephesus, when Diana was threatened, has resounded through the ages long before and long after Paul preached in a manner to endanger the sale of silver images. This self-same spirit made the rabble, at the instigation of their rulers, cry out, "Not this man, but Barabbas." The following phrase, "now Barabbas was a robber," is singularly effective and expressive, as the people, who, in their ignorance, call out against a true reformer, are always, though often unconsciously to themselves, in league with and the prey of robbers.

To accuse the Jewish nation of putting Jesus to death, is to accuse falsely, while to point to the ruins of Jerusalem and the dispersed condition of Israel as a fulfillment of imaginary prophecies which have no existence except in the distorted fancy of certain Christians, is to show a lamentable ignorance of the real facts of history. Such ignorance can scarcely be other than culpable. An old proverb says, "There are none so blind as those who will not see," and it certainly does appear that not a few among orthodox teachers are so determined to read everything in one way only, that the transparent facts of history, everywhere staring them in the face, are wholly disregarded, for no other reason than for the very same reason that led to the persecution of the Nazarene, the unwillingness of sectaries to see anything good or true outside the narrow groove of their own denominations.

Dr. Gordon, in his recent sermon, has done nothing whatever to establish his opinions in the minds of any unimpassioned reader, as every text he quotes from the Old Testament has long ago been rationally interpreted otherwise by the ablest Hebrew scholars in the world. In our last lecture on Jesus, we endeavored to show how Herod and Pilate conspired together to put an innocent man to death for political reasons, and how easily they deluded the populace into believing that they were their best friends, while they were in reality disregarding the law of justice and the interests of the people altogether,

and working solely for their own promotion at the court of Cæsar. It was for political reasons that Jesus was condemned. The real charge against him was, that he made himself a king, and the people shouted, "We have no king but Cæsar." The cry against him, in behalf of Cæsar, was most un-Jewish, for Cæsar was an object of aversion to the Jew, far more so than the King of England was an object of dislike to the American people prior to 1776. Cæsar was the embodiment of Roman oppression, the object of fervent dislike, and most naturally so. Those particular Jews who sided with the Romans, were apostates, and could not possibly have represented the multitude, who were ready, when Bar Kockba appeared, to engage at once in a military revolt against the Roman government. No: the cry against the Jews as a people is an utterly false one, and until it is wholly abandoned Christian teachers will continue to incur the odium of the fair-minded and the learned, and also to inspire the ignorant with an unfounded detestation of the Jews.

The cry against the Jew in Christian countries has always been loudest where the descendants of Abraham have been found able to more than cope with Christian opposition. Owning no land, they naturally wished to possess gold and jewels, easily transported treasure. Finding other offices closed against them, they strove to control the money market, and when they succeeded, thus showing themselves possessed of uncommon smartness in business, they incurred the hatred of the Christians, who, as a rule, were less intelligent than they. Then the fever broke out, anti-Semitic insurrections became the order of the day; priests and people invented lies against them, and repeated them so often that they at length fixed them so firmly in the minds of posterity that, no doubt, many a modern fanatic and many a thoughtless follower in the train of inherited ideas really supposes that he is telling the truth, and has both testaments on his side, when he declares that the Jews

have been persecuted and wandering for nearly two thousand years, because they put to death the immaculate son of God and man, the Christ of Galilee.

We hear so much of the word of God being the Bible, and of the Bible being the word of God, and of the word of God therein contained being absolute, unsullied truth, that we must be pardoned by our Christian antagonists, if we prefer the words of the Bible to their own; not a series of texts taken from here and there and strung together to support a foregone conclusion, but the simple consecutive Bible story, allowed to speak for itself. This story, as told by the four evangelists, is not complete in every detail, is certainly not infallible, and is certainly not entirely free from distressing omissions on the one hand, and interpolations on the other. It is now almost universally admitted that four of Paul's epistles are older than any of the Gospels, and Paul was not a contemporary of Jesus, but declares himself to have been converted to Christianity by a vision. He was a most impetuous and self-asserting man, and he it was who founded a dogmatic Christian system, of which Jesus was wholly innocent. Jesus was a Jewish reformer; Paul, a zealous, hot-headed comeouter, who, in common with most extremists, soon saw no good in a system which had previously appeared to him the only true one. That he was a conscientious and a learned man, an enthusiast who almost yearned to die a martyr's death and wear a martyr's crown, we do not dispute; but his zeal was not usually tempered with discretion; he was powerfully eloquent, intensely willing to suffer persecution for the sake of anything he might consider righteousness, but he wanted to rule; his was a domineering intellect that could ill brook even the slightest opposition; from him we can trace the aggressive Christian hierarchy, but not from Jesus. Paul was a disputant, a wrangler, one who would like to have been a pope, and who did far more than Peter to pave the way for the papacy. Jesus despised earthly offices, disregarded out-

ward institutions and honors, and preached only the law of love without a spice of retaliation in his system.

In the days of Jesus there were three great parties in Israel: the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenians. Jesus and his immediate followers were evidently connected with both the Pharisaic and the Essenian sects; the Sadducees evidently opposed them. When we have opportunity to enter fully into the tenets of these three parties, we shall hope to modify the general opinion which prevails concerning the Pharisees and their hypocrisy, which has been greatly exaggerated. There were hypocrites among them undoubtedly, but, as a rule, their characteristic feature was the stress they laid on good works — not by any means, as some have supposed, on idle formalism coupled with sneaking hypocrisy. The Sadducees were sceptics, rationalists, believing in little they could not reduce to the comprehension of their senses. Among them were many learned men and able lawyers, but they were by far the most unspiritual of the three Jewish sects.

The Essenians were Communists. In some respects they resembled the modern American Shakers. They had all things in common, denied the right of warfare, refused to retaliate in any form. Many of them practised celibacy, and all were eminent in a marked degree for the purity and simplicity of their morals and habits. Among them were many theurgists, Kabalists and Spiritualists.

Jesus does not seem to have been altogether one of them, and yet 150 B. C. they were the promulgators of the self-same views he so vehemently defended. Jesus was a religious eclectic, not confined to any one party; his object was to unite the good in all, and for this reason he met with opposition from all; but as the Essenians never persecuted or attacked any one, they being the peace party, regarding violence as sinful, no mention is made in the Gospels that Jesus or his followers suffered anything from them. They were quiet, unobtrusive

mystics, who employed spiritual, but never carnal, weapons.

Luke was evidently an Essenian ; he was probably the author of the Acts of the Apostles, as well as of the third Gospel. He was a Communist, and such it appears were all the apostles at the time of the outpouring of the spirit, which followed the disappearance of Jesus from earthly sight.

Rev. Joseph Cook and others like him, in their tirades against Communism, have literally sneered at the closing verses of the second chapter of Acts, thus showing how much reliance they place on apostolic discipline when the Holy Ghost happens to disagree with their pet hobbies.

The rationalist says that the Bible is not infallible, and acts according to his profession. The stickler for "high views of inspiration" says that the Bible is infallible, and acts as though he believed some parts of it were far too silly and impracticable to follow. Consistency thou art a jewel ! but where canst thou be found among those who profess to prize thee most highly ?

The Gospels, as we have before reminded you, date back only to three or four hundred years after the events recorded in them were said to have occurred. Thus there was ample time for a coloring of the narrative ; and if Orthodox clergymen point us to the far greater antiquity of four of Paul's epistles, they are only making the inconsistencies appear more glaring, as the Gospels do not by any means endorse all that Paul puts forward as divine truth.

The Gospels are not spurious ; they are not forgeries ; they are honest attempts to record events truly ; but they show small signs of being miraculously inspired. They agree well enough to show that they were not written at the time the events took place, but yet written with an honest intent to make a truthful record of events, but not well enough to support the slightest claim to divine origin or authority. They are human compositions, in-

spired indeed as Homer, Virgil, Milton, Shakespeare, were inspired; inspired, as inspiration falls upon the heads of modern poets and teachers, but giving no evidence whatever of supernatural origin. The only sect in Christendom that can successfully attempt to prove them more than human is the Swedenborgian, and this denomination can do so only by attributing to them spiritual and celestial meanings, which lie so deep beneath the surface that the ordinary reader, unsupplied with the key of correspondence, cannot possibly unlock their inner meaning. Swedenborg, though accepting the four gospels and the Apocalypse as containing the divine word, does not allow to the epistles any such divine authority.

When taken out of the realm of external history altogether, the story of the life of Jesus becomes allegorical, and in that light conveys to the spiritually-minded a magnificent conception of the human soul, its many conflicts and its final triumph over sense. As this interior view of the matter will form the subject of our next discourse, we shall not enlarge upon it here, but only pause to recognize it as a clue to far more interior truth than any we have yet attempted to present in this popular course of Sunday evening discourses. We will now very briefly review the leading events which followed the Transfiguration, after having said just a word on that great circumstance itself.

The scene of the transfiguration has been immortalized and rendered familiar to all lovers of art by Raphael's sublime conception of it. In all the world we doubt whether there is a finer work of art than that. The scene as portrayed by Raphael is at once natural and sublime; it divinizes humanity and humanizes divinity by a single stroke of the brush. Jesus is there as a perfectly human character, but shining in all the refulgence of manifested deity. No trinitarian dogma steps in, to rob the painter's art of its thrilling power to invest humanity with its God-like attributes. It is not

the second person of the church's trinity who has assumed flesh for man's redemption, that there gazes upon us from the canvas; it is a man who has risen to almost perfect oneness with God through self-surrender and the surrender also of every earthly hope. Until then Jesus may possibly have entertained ideas of becoming King of Israel; he may have yielded somewhat to the prevailing idea that a warrior Messiah was about to appear and that he himself was that Messiah. Mt. Tabor is the scene of the utter frustration of such hopes. Moses and Elias, Law and Prophecy, are revealed to him in a new light; he reads them as he has never before, or if it be argued that such experiences were needless in his own case, as he never entertained any ambitious hopes at all, then it was for the sake of Peter, James and John, his three closest followers and most intimate disciples, that the vision was granted. He was transfigured before them, that is, he appeared to them thenceforward as a teacher whose kingdom was not of this world, whose mission was solely to establish righteousness and that most certainly by other means than force of arms.

It is always extremely difficult to eradicate from even the most willing breast, a deep-seated longing or conviction. It need not then surprise us that those very disciples who had seen their master transfigured, again and again, recurred to the old idea and strove even to impress their master with a desire for earthly sovereignty. There can be no doubt that the central figure in the gospel story had to struggle very severely with the temptation to assume the role of military hero and temporal deliverer of his countrymen. Three years previous to his trial, we are told, the devil tempted him with a vision of the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, a phrase easily understood by any who are familiar with the prevailing Jewish belief of two thousand years ago. Israel was to conquer every land beneath the sun; all her enemies were to be as dust before the wind, as

stubble before the whirlwind, the Lord scattering them; the Messiah was to utterly subdue all nations to Israel, which was to become the greatest political as well as religious power on earth. We can well understand the energy with which those who believed in Jesus would urge the plea that he should head an army; they were all ready for revolt and needed only the slightest stimulus to stir them up to bold and bloody insurrection. We are told that the people at times endeavored to take Jesus by force and make him a king and that he hid himself from them; and when, at the very end of his career, Peter suggested temporal victories, he answered, "Get thee behind me, Satan (accuser), for thou savorest not the things of God, but those that be of man." In that utterance we learn that the Satan which buffeted Jesus was none else than any and every influence which would seduce him into falling in with the popular messianic conception and allowing himself to pose as the long expected deliverer of his race.

On the Sunday before his crucifixion he rides into Jerusalem on an ass, and thereby seems to fulfill certain of the Messianic predictions. The populace without doubt are encouraged by this act into supposing that he is now about to assert his claims as the promised deliverer; they shout hosanna, and exclaim, "Blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." The waving of palms and the vociferous shouts of applause are amply sufficient to lead the envious chief priests and rulers to determine on his execution. Judas, one of the twelve disciples, allows himself to be the means of his master's betrayal; he bargains for thirty pices of silver, for which paltry sum he is willing to lead his kind and faithful master into the hands of his relentless foe.

The character of Judas is a complex one; he is not by any means so bad a type of man as many have supposed; avarice was his leading fault, but he was not wholly avaricious, as his after conduct proves. The pangs of remorse for the deed he had done seized him

with such terror that he threw down the silver when he found out he could not undo his deed, and then went and committed suicide.

Judas is alive in many a money loving disciple to-day ; he is not an inexorable villain with no redeeming traits, he is sufficiently attached to the master to follow him through many privations and to suffer torture after he has betrayed him ; but to put it most mildly, to construe his action in the most charitable manner possible, he does evil that good may come. Were he utterly unfaithful, were he a wolf in a sheep's clothing, an enemy in disguise, he would have been a hardened sinner and would have gloated over the success of his infamous conspiracy. He was, however, only a representative of that large class who are so blinded by the prospect of even a little worldly gain, that for a scant pittance of emolument they will persuade themselves into the false belief that treachery, deceit, and guile, though they cannot finally overcome the right, may bring to them some advantage and at the same time give the truth an opportunity of showing its supremacy over error.

Judas no doubt thought that he could pocket thirty pieces of silver and give his master an opportunity of displaying supernatural power in escaping from the hands of his enemies. He is deceived, he has done a wrong, and he must suffer bitterly in his own experience. He does not even ask forgiveness ; he does not approach the friend he has injured, and crave his pardon. Jesus would no doubt have instantly forgiven him ; he must have had him in his mind when he prayed for his murderers on the cross, and attributed their sin to ignorance ; but the fault of Judas brought him to that point where he must expiate his guilt by sufferings of the most fearful kind.

We know there are many Christians who do not hesitate to say that Judas is damned for ever, but in making any such blasphemous assertion they insult and utterly repudiate the gospel of the master they profess to serve. The plot thickens ; Jesus is apparently either deserted

by the spiritual power, which had come to his aid so many times before and carried him safely through so many trying crises, or he does not feel it to be right to use his power, as he feels his hour has come to die and then to rise victorious over death. There must have been a terrible struggle in his mind when in Gethsemane it was finally revealed to him that through submitting even to death, he would win his fairest laurels and bless the world the most. Even on the cross the cry escapes his lips, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but the last utterance on record is not a wail of anguish, not a note of despair, but the triumphant committal of his soul to the Eternal: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." His enemies have done their worst; his mangled body is taken from the cross and laid in Joseph's tomb. This is on Friday afternoon. On Sunday morning, before it is yet light, he appears to his disciples, convincing them of his immortality, and confirming every truth he ever hinted at before his trial, of the spiritual nature of his kingdom. Then they understood him, then they knew that his death was only an appearance, an illusion of the senses; he was superior to death, and when his mission on earth was ended, he became invisible to mortal sight, and, as the legend says, "He ascended into heaven."

Jesus was a triumphant illustration of the absolute power of spirit over sense; his agony and conflicts were the struggles we must all endure before the final moment comes when entire subjection of sense permits the perfect liberty of the indwelling spirit. Between the two wills which are within us, the human and the divine, the personal and the universal, there is a perpetual conflict, until at length the immortal conquers the mortal and life destroys death. The world will not always be a charnel house; but graveyards and crematories will not be destroyed until the soul shall have asserted its rightful sovereignty over all of sense; then shall death be destroyed, yea, swallowed up in the victory of spirit over matter.

As the individual soul conquers only by employing its own native powers to the utter discomfiture of all material opposition, so does the teaching of truth assure us that if any nation or community aspires to permanent glory, the nation or community that can show itself superior to the need of warfare and all the intrigues of strife alone can lift its head above all others.

The darkness of the age, the materiality of the people, led to their rejection of the impersonal, invisible Messiah of spiritual power of which Jesus of Nazareth was an illustration and exponent.

When, in after years, Bar Kochba and other military heroes came, the people flocked to their standards, shed their blood like water, but all in vain. Defeat, not victory, followed the perverted conception of the true Messianic idea. The enlightened of every clime to-day are giving up all hopes of Messianic deliverers of the military type, while the spirit of truth, the only saviour and redeemer of mankind, pleads again and again through those men and women who give themselves up most fully to its sway. The prophets ever prophesy, as Isaiah did of old, that the victorious Israel of the future will be composed of those alone who spend their days in the service of righteousness, who trust no more in broken reeds of temporal supremacy, but gain the highest place on earth among the nations, because it is ever true that righteousness exalteth a nation, while immorality has been the cause of the downfall of all that are destroyed.

[Persons interested in this subject are strongly advised to procure "The Spirit of the New Testament," on sale at Berkeley and Langham Halls; price \$1.25 cloth, \$1.00 paper. This valuable work contains over 500 closely printed pages, and will well repay most diligent perusal.]
— W. J. COLVILLE.

Jesus at the Wedding Feast, Turning Water into Wine.

AT the request of a member of our congregation, who informs us that he has recently listened to a very interesting discourse on the subject of the first miracle performed by Jesus as recorded in the Fourth Gospel, and who much desires to hear our views upon this topic, we have selected it as the theme of our present lecture, feeling sure that, though perhaps at first sight a somewhat unpromising theme, as we look deeper into it we shall find a great many lessons easily deducible from it. The narrative reads as follows :—

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee ; and the mother of Jesus was there.

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee ? mine hour is not yet come.

His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*.

And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine ; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse ; *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory ; and his disciples believed on him.

From the above account of this most extraordinary occurrence, we learn that Jesus was a man who had no

intentions whatever, either in the course of his public ministry or social life, of putting a veto upon the innocent amusements and recreations of the world ; on the contrary, he not only shares in the conviviality of a marriage banquet, he adds to it.

Old Dr. Watts, stern theologian though he was and Calvinist besides, did not disparage innocent enjoyments ; he did not berate pleasure, but distinctly asserted that pilgrims travelling Zionward should be full of joy. Those two memorable lines of one of the finest hymns he ever wrote, —

“Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less,”—

accord perfectly with the life and teaching of his professed Lord and Master. If Christianity means a following of the historic Christ, then Dr. Watts, when he wrote those lines, accurately interpreted the genius of Christianity. If such sentiments as these had been promulgated universally, if every scholar in a Sunday School had been taught to look upon religion as a happy, joyful thing, sanctifying indeed, but nevertheless increasing instead of diminishing earthly happiness, there would not be so many infidels as there are to-day, nor so many young people utterly indifferent even when they are not actually opposed to religious ideas and practices.

Some time ago, a Baptist clergyman in this city undertook to denounce all pleasure as sinful, and took a New Testament text for his sermon which in no sense justified the inferences he undertook to draw from it. His text very properly upbraided those who love pleasure more than they love God ; but not to love pleasure so much as God does not mean that we are to hate pleasure, but only that we must rightfully control and subordinate our affections, the lower to the higher. The proper subordination of affections is the true philosophy of manhood as well as angelhood, and perhaps no one has put the matter better or more clearly than Swedenborg, who calls attention to three great, conspicuous objects of regard —

God, our neighbors, and ourselves. Swedenborg says that the proper order of affection is, first, God ; second, Neighbor ; third, Self. No hatred of self is there implied ; on the contrary, self-love is commended and deemed a necessity. No slight or indifference must be shown to others ; on the contrary, we are told to think of our neighbors before ourselves ; but before all else we must place God, and God stands for supreme, infinite and absolute good ; for righteousness *per se* ; for justice in its perfect form ; in a word, for everything that can possibly be meant by that greatest and most inclusive of all words in the language, Virtue.

Pleasure, if it be pleasure in reality, must be healthful, beneficial and productive of permanent enjoyment to all who participate in it. Every true pleasure is immortal ; you can look back down the avenues of a long life and remember distinctly all the genuine pleasures of your childhood ; you can never forget them ; no time, no business, no sorrow can obliterate their memory from your hearts, and you cannot look back to them without deriving present hope, comfort and inspiration from the thought and remembrance of the sweet days and scenes of old. It is indeed better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all ; it is indeed better to have enjoyed and then to suffer afterwards than never to have enjoyed at all. Memory is such a deathless and bewitching element in our nature that to dwell upon the past is oftentimes to live it over again ; to summon up not only the ghosts of by gone hours, but the actual feelings and sensations which were ours in those departed days.

To have had a home, if one is now homeless ; to have had friends, if one is now friendless, is a thousand-fold more blessed than never to have known the pure delights of innocent enjoyment. Those most to be pitied are divisible into just two classes ; one, of those who have never really known joy, and the other of those who, having known it, have forfeited it by their own misdoing. But even this latter class need not be hopeless, as the

saddening memory of a lost paradise can also be employed to nerve the spirit to set to work to regain it.

It is needless to say that every purely selfish enjoyment is likely to be harmful, as nothing tends more surely and swiftly to immorality than an overweening regard for one's private and individual happiness. Directly we cease to think of others in our joy, immediately we become so wrapped up in our own personal interests that, to use a common phrase, we care not who sinks so long as we swim, we are in peril, and are liable at any moment to strike upon the most dangerous rocks or lose ourselves in the most treacherous quicksands of iniquity.

We are told by the biographers of Jesus that before he commenced his three years' public ministry, he was led by the spirit (the spirit of God) into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and that while there enduring the buffetings of Satan, the tempter urged him when he was hungry, after a forty days' fast, to work a miracle in order to satisfy his appetite. He refused and persisted in treating the suggestion as an infernal one. Now, there seems at first sight no good reason why a hungry man should not turn stones into bread to gratify a natural and normal craving for material food, if he could do so. Could there any harm come to the famishing multitudes who throng all the crowded thoroughfares of the great centres of the modern world by satisfying their hunger if they could do so, even by a miracle? Where could the most stringent opponent of sorcery find a single vestige of the black art in such a natural yielding to the heaven-born instinct of self-preservation? Looked at from a superficial standpoint, there could be no sin in multiplying loaves and fishes to satisfy one's own personal hunger, were one able to do so when famishing. But a deeper insight into these old stories, which are, every one of them, spiritual allegories written with a view to expound some great spiritual truth of universal import, will reveal to us a glorious law of self-surrender in the refusal of one who could work miracles to do so in

his own behalf, while he was ever ready to perform similar miracles for the good of others.

We need not apologize to any of our hearers for continuing to employ the old word "miracle," since we have often defined it as meaning nothing more than an astonishing occurrence, a phenomenon exciting a feeling of wonder or marvel in those who witness it. This emotion in the breasts of the spectators is of course no evidence that the wonder does not take place in perfect harmony with some natural law; the only difference, etymologically speaking, between a miracle and what is not a miracle, consisting in the fact that the former takes place in obedience to an unfamiliar, and the latter to a familiar, law. Magic is in the ears of many a detestable word; but white magic is as pure as black magic is impure. There are always two sides to every question, and they who look only on one are never prepared to judge intelligently any question, though often such persons in their arrogant self-conceit are ever ready to prejudge all questions.

Spiritual phenomena to-day are not necessarily any different from those of past ages. The wonders of the spirit made manifest in the days of Jesus are being duplicated now; and, as Whittier says, every land may become a Palestine. Spiritual triumphs were rare in ancient days; they are becoming more general now, and thus they create far less wonder in the popular mind of this generation than in that of by-gone periods.

Were Jesus living on earth now, he would appear to many as a sorcerer. Many conservative religionists would put him out of their churches and synagogues as a blasphemer and impostor; one in league with Satan, even if they granted the genuineness of his works. Many rabid reformers, who are sometimes only shallow iconoclasts parading their ignorance under an assumed guise of superior wisdom, would denounce him as a charlatan and declare his miracles to be cunning tricks which an expert conjuror might expose, as some of these learned

men propose to pronounce final judgment upon all cabalistic and other mystical works, wiping them all out of existence by writing upon their covers the words, superstition, deceit, swindle, and other similarly euphonious adjectives. Heaven defend us from the narrow bigotry of unreasoning denial which is every whit as cruel a taskmaster as unreasoning credulity. No scientist dares to say that miracles are impossible. When he makes such an assertion he forfeits all claim to be considered as anything better than a sciolist. A scientist, however, may be quite justified in entertaining a very positive conviction that there is a uniform law of nature, in accordance with which every event occurs; but, while some know more of the law than others, those who know most of it will be able to greatly astonish all who know less.

The boyhood of Jesus is not referred to at all in the synoptical gospels. From the age of twelve to that of thirty years, we read nothing of him in the New Testament; we are told that when only twelve, he astonished the doctors of Jerusalem by his precocity; and at thirty he presents himself to John the Baptist and insists upon being baptized by him in Jordan; immediately after which ceremony he is taken by the Spirit into the wilderness to undergo a forty days' fast and temptation, at the close of which he begins a three years' ministry, traveling through Galilee as a preacher, healer, and worker of miracles. At the outset of this ministry he gives proof of his wonderful gift of theurgy by turning water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee.

The eighteen years concerning which the gospels say nothing, mystic lore informs us were spent in travel as far as Persia, Arabia, Egypt, and even Hindostan, in which countries he is said to have visited and founded lodges, and perfected himself as an adept in eastern magic. Be this as it may, Jesus is, to the student in theosophy, one of the most remarkable red magicians the world has ever seen. His attainments coincide so perfectly with the claims made by occultism generally,—

the fully unfolded mystic consecrates his every gift to the benefiting of the human family,—that had his mission been to enlightened Buddhists, they would have accepted him as another incarnation of Vishnu and would have discerned in him the spirit of the great and holy Gautama; but his work was not to those who were ready to receive him with open arms and cordially welcome him into the chambers of their affections; he must tread the rough and thorny way strewn with cruel briars by the very hands he longed to grasp in tenderest embrace of love; and such is ever the work of the highest spiritual messengers which heaven sends to earth. They must break the ice, they must bear the brunt of the storm, the burden and heat of the day. Only the strong can bear it, and therefore lighter tasks are given to weaker spirits. The soul on earth to whom is given a torch of light to carry into the deepest shadow, is the one who stands nearest to the throne of the Eternal; a weak soul can carry sweet flowers to adorn the brow of a conqueror, but only a strong spirit can take the first plunge into the arena of conflict and challenge all the hosts of earth and hell to put out the light he carries into their abodes of darkness.

It is comparatively easy to be a saint in solitude. Zimmerman may well sing its praises. Monks and nuns desiring to escape the world may well imagine that the cloister is the haven of refuge for the easily tempted heart; for there, no matter how fierce may be subjective trials, let the spiritual conflict be ever so severe, there is no outward persecution; but to run away from the world is not noble. An author may retire into his sanctum and lock his door while he writes, but when his book is finished the world outside reaps what he has sown in solitude; the artist may need privacy as he paints the picture which shall illumine a thousand lives as soon as it is finished. But such retirement is not running away from society at all, it is only so conditioning one's self that one may be able to give to society more and better than would be possible if the giver had no solitude.

Jesus went out upon the lake of Tiberias, and up into the mountains, and there spent days and nights alone; but he came back from those silent communings with the interior world stronger and braver, and better equipped with light and health for those whom he should encounter on the shore and in the valleys.

The great beauty of the life of Jesus was, that it was spent among men in such a way as to sanctify all common things and lift to an ideal height the ordinary pleasures and occupations of daily life. Never was there a time when a great spiritual luminary was more needed in the social world than at this present moment. We hear on every hand that the masses are not religious, that the church does not attract the young. If the people do not go to church, it is for the church to go to the people; if a minister wishes not so much to be popular as to do good, he must be a power for good in society; his place is at the theatre, at fashionable parties, and indeed everywhere where the respectable portion of his flock go to seek amusement: and we go farther; we declare that his place is also in the most disreputable quarters where the most missionary work needs to be done. The question, why do you go to a place, not, do you go or stay away, is the one that needs to be answered before any true estimate of your motives can be taken. Ministers who sit in their studies writing vituperative articles against the Sunday newspapers and all places of popular amusement, which they on their own confession have never visited, are doing vastly more harm than good. If their letters and sermons have the effect which they desire, and succeed in keeping the members of their congregation out of all theatres and away from all parties; if they succeed in banishing the Sunday newspapers from the homes of their flocks, what good will they do? None whatever. They will be, to use their own phraseology, most effectually playing into the hands of the devil; for the devil can have it all his own way, when spirits of a higher order leave him in full possession of the field.

The giver of a wedding feast invited Jesus to a banquet, and Jesus very wisely accepted the invitation and went. He did not say, "It is not proper to make merry; hilarity, joviality, and all the world's festivities are wiles of Satan, traps set by the evil one, gins and snares laid in your way by a roaring lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour." But quite the reverse. Jesus went to the feast, and his mother was there also. It was a respectable occasion; occasions usually are when mothers and sons are present together. Young men, beware of frequenting banquets to which your mother could not receive an invitation; and, mothers, go with your sons to places of innocent enjoyment, and teach them that a true mother's part is ever to rejoice in her boy's enjoyment, and so to encourage him in the pursuit of harmless pleasure that he may be satisfied, without seeking those pernicious haunts where mothers cannot go. To refuse an invitation to a banquet because it is a banquet, is to set a very bad example. To put all places of amusement and popular literature under the ban, is to force the providers of such commodities to cater to a diseased moral taste.

Good plays now-a-days fill theatres better than bad ones. Vulgarity is never witnessed on the stage when Booth, Barrett, Irving, Salvini, Mary Anderson, or any other leading actor is fulfilling an engagement, but on such occasions the managers make money, the houses are packed from orchestra to gallery — everybody who can possibly afford it goes, and comes away benefited by the performance. It is plainly the duty of the religious public to patronize good plays and encourage managers to cater to refined tastes, for by so doing everything of an obscene tendency will be gradually starved out of the field. But keep away all the respectable people from the theatres altogether, and the managers, in order to make a living, must cater to the most objectionable demands of depraved tastes.

Just so with the Sunday newspapers. The citizens of Boston take the Herald and the Globe into their fami-

lies, and those papers are improving steadily. They are furnishing as valuable information as the best pulpits, platforms or magazines; they are presenting to the populace attractive, spicy articles, full of interest, and by such means are increasing their circulation. Drop all such papers, you church-goers, at the advice of your ill-advised ministers, and the papers surely will not die, but they will have to deteriorate in order to live.

Jesus, were he on earth and in America to-day, would go to the theatre and take the Sunday paper; but he would use his influence to its utmost limit to raise the tone of the stage and the press alike. He would take what now is in many cases only water, and convert that water into wine, and this transformation he would accomplish in the most natural manner possible, though it would indeed be inexplicable to the bystanders how he brought the change about.

Let us look closely for a moment at the symbols under our gaze,—WATER and WINE. According to Genesis, everything came out of the water. We are told that before there was any dry land the waters covered the face of the deep, and that the spirit of God, moving over the waters, caused them to subside, and the dry land was made to appear.

Water is the primal element; out of it all life springs, but water does not bring forth its offspring until something superior to it has been at work. The old cosmical theory of creation, partly veiled and partly explained in Genesis, is in exact accordance with Prof. Huxley's views upon aquosity, in which he traces the development of all life from a watery beginning. Baptism by water is spoken of in all sacred literature as a ceremony to take place previous to baptism by fire. Being born of water and then of the Holy Spirit, unquestionably means awaking to intellectual vigor first, and then to spiritual manhood.

In the Kabala the four orders of elementary spirits are defined as follows: Spirits of earth, typifying animal

propensities; spirits of water, intellectual desires; spirits of air, aspirational or imaginative faculties; and spirits of fire, the pure emotions of the soul.

Wine has been employed from time immemorial to signify the divine life of the soul beyond the intellect; blood and wine have been frequently mixed in ancient symbolism, as blood is the life of man, and wine the juice or blood of the grape is, when eaten with bread, amply sufficient to sustain human life in perfect health and vigor. You have all heard of the grape cure in the south of France, where diseases pronounced incurable have been wholly eradicated from the system by feeding the patient for a considerable time on grapes alone. The best physiologists of Europe admit this fact without reservation, and it is now generally admitted by physicians of renown that the pure wine of the East was simply the outpressed juice of the grape, not an intoxicating stimulant; all temperance lecturers of note know that there were two kinds of wine used by orientals; the kind condemned by Solomon, called in Proverbs "strong drink and raging," is of course the adulterated intoxicating species; while the wine recommended by Paul to Timothy was in all probability the healthful, nutritious juice of the grape, a strictly non-intoxicating liquor and peculiarly adapted to invalids and children.

Many painters represent Jesus and his disciples at the last supper with bunches of grapes on the table, squeezing the juice into their cups; the skins of the large, oriental grapes being rejected as injurious and indigestible. Taking the story literally does not in any way require us to believe that Jesus encouraged a taste for alcohol, for there is no more alcohol in strictly pure wine than in a bunch of grapes, and even prohibitionists do not exclude the grape from their table.

Pure wine has always been the highest and best element that can possibly be extracted from material things. Water contains the rudiments of wine; only it needs the action of an outside agency to convert it into wine, just

as earth, fire, water, and air are all necessary to convert the seed into a flower or the embryo into a living organism. Thus the literal side of the miracle by no means involves an impossibility, but only such a manipulation of the ordinary forces of nature as to render the result extraordinary.

You have doubtless all read about some of the performances of the Hindoo Fakirs, numerous accounts of which have been published and their genuineness attested by hundreds of accessible, competent, living witnesses. One of the most remarkable of these wonders, which cannot possibly be attributed to jugglery by any who have ever seen it, is the development of the perfect flowering gourd or mango tree, in a few minutes, from the seed of this plant. The fakir exerts himself violently, breathes copiously on the seed which is planted in ordinary earth; and by concentration of will and the giving, through vigorous manipulations of the seed, of a large amount of vital magnetism, called by orientals *akasa* or astral fluid, which is the magnetism of the astral or spiritual as well as of the physical body, he causes the seed to germinate; the plant appears, blossoms, bears fruit and fades away; all in less than an hour. The ordinary processes of nature are greatly accelerated in the accomplishment of such a mystery, but no one of them is set aside. The above illustration will serve as a case in point to lead the minds of those who ask the why and wherefore of miracles to see that even when they do actually occur, no law of nature is suspended or set aside, but that nature's law makes provision for the exercise of forces of various degrees of potency; the higher forces always carry the day; forces are always competing together, all struggle for supremacy, and as *WILL* is the highest and most powerful, *will* contends with the ordinary laws of being, and *will* being the source and centre of all law, gets above every ordinary cause which produces natural phenomena and induces results due to the action of a superior cause; therefore

the results are superior and in a measure incomprehensible except to those who have unfolded the ability to produce them.

But it is not with the mere letter of the miracle that we care especially to concern ourselves; the spiritual teaching conveyed in the narrative is what we are after, and we do indeed feel that we have struck a mine of rich ore whenever we confront an oriental tale designed to set forth in glowing, symbolic language some of those deeply interesting and valuable moral lessons which all inspired orientals have communicated from race to race and age to age by means of brilliant and attractive symbols.

At the wedding feast we find a company of people gathered together in the name of festivity, but yet ready to mingle a spiritual element with their joy. They begin with the ordinary enjoyments of the hour; they drink to the full of the wine that is usually set before the guests on such occasions; but the wine gives out, and when they have drunk all that has been provided, then comes the occasion for giving them a taste of something richer and purer. We shall get no higher truths, no deeper spiritual knowledge, no richer spiritual food, until we have used up all the blessings we enjoy already; we must experience a hunger and a thirst for something more, before we shall get it. We are often asked why there is no more light shed by the spiritual world on the great problems of life immortal? why deeper truths are not revealed? why more copious spiritual banquets are not provided? why the viands and beverages are not costlier and more varied? Our answer is invariably the same; we must get sated with the old before we shall get the new; we must have drunk up the old wine and even broken the old bottles before we shall be ready for the new wine of more exalted spiritual teaching; but as soon as we have extracted from the old all the nutriment it contains, as soon as we have emptied the old vessels completely, then we are in readiness and anxiety to receive a higher revelation of truth for the further nourishing of our spiritual being.

. In this old story of the water being converted into wine, we find no trace whatever of a proselyting spirit manifested by Jesus. His hour was not come until the wine provided by the master of the feast was all gone; not until the guests thirsted, not until the host was embarrassed, looking round him in perplexity, wondering how he could get over the difficulty of his situation, did the miracle occur. An old proverb says, "Man's necessity is God's opportunity," and it is indeed so; necessity is not only as another proverb puts it, "the mother of invention," but is the only thing that creates within us a craving for something higher than we already possess. The unrest, discontent, dissatisfaction, everywhere abounding at the present day, appears to us no more than a prelude to an age when people desiring more, ready to receive and appreciate more than they have ever previously enjoyed, will see in the discontent, then over, the necessary agent for providing society with the conditions adapted to the next higher step in social unfoldment. The best wine comes at the end of the feast, not at the beginning, and this truth startled the guests at Cana of Galilee; it was a new progressive theory, demonstrated by a great spiritual reformer. They in common with the mass of their fellow-countrymen and co-religionists had been accustomed to look backward to the golden age; now they were taught to look forward to it. They had always believed that God had poured out the best wine of heaven upon the earth, giving mortals to drink of celestial nectar in a past highly favored spot of earth and in a privileged age unhappily gone by; but Eden is more a prophecy than a history. Paradise is to come on earth in the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; the best wine is to be distilled at the end of the feast of earthly life, not at the beginning, and its distillation is to be accomplished by a perfect manipulation, by a master hand, of all the common things of life. Jesus, we are told, used the water that was standing in the hall, placed there for purposes of purification. There was nothing

singular about the water; no mystery attached to its presence there, it always stood there on such occasions, and it usually gave evidence of being nothing more than ordinary water; but, when touched by Jesus, it became wine.

You can do just as you please about believing in the letter of the miracle. It is, for all instructive purposes, quite unnecessary to decide whether such a miracle ever actually took place or not; and if it did, it would be possible so to subvert the account of it as to make the temperance advocate wish it had never occurred or never had been recorded. But as the legend of this miracle tells us the commonest element was converted into the choicest and most nutritious, let us follow the spirit of the narrative, and see if we cannot, in our daily lives, turn water into wine, not literally, but spiritually.

The inner meaning of the story is self-evidently freighted with the deepest and most encouraging inspiration for all. Water is something you all have in your houses; even if you live in the most squalid tenement, you are provided with a supply of water. Water is a free gift of nature; the poorest can drink it and bathe in it; it comes down from the clouds, it wells up from the earth, and says to all: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, drink, though ye have no money and no home." Water is therefore an exquisitely simple and comprehensive correspondence of what is within the reach of all. We can all get water. Can we all be miracle-workers, and turn it into wine? To drop the metaphor: We all have some talent, some influence, some opportunity. Can we take what we have, poor and simple, very ordinary, though it be, and by a process of moral alchemy transmute it into something so far beyond everything that it ever gave promise of becoming, that our life shall appear a miraculously helpful one to all with whom we come in contact? Every one of us can do this if we only will. We may need a forty days' sojourn in the wilderness and many encounters with wild

beasts and seductive demons, before we can go forth on our spiritual pilgrimage accomplishing such wonders, but they are possible; they have been accomplished; they will be again, and there is no reason under heaven why we should not ourselves accomplish them in our daily lives.

Is it not true that some people refine and glorify all they touch? Cannot some persons bring the tears to your eyes and move every emotion of your soul by a simple recitation, which, from the lips of an ordinary reciter, falls stale, flat and unprofitable? Elocution, eloquence, rhetoric, logic, are all good in their way; a pleasing voice, a finished style, absolute accuracy in grammar and expression, these are all ornaments of speech, and tend to impress the popular mind with the dignity of what you have to say; but the water may remain water, it may never become wine on the lips of one who is only an orator and rhetorician. Soul, feeling, genuine pathos, a great, loving heart, making its beatings heard through the vehicle of external speech, often overcoming the most serious defects in style, and more than atoning for the lack of all outward culture, this is what tells; this is what goes home to all hearers. Have you a message to deliver? Do you feel commissioned from on high to impart some truth to man? Is your whole soul in the work? Then you can defy every canon of polite criticism; you can be, scholastically speaking, an ignoramus; you need never have seen the inside of a schoolhouse, and yet you can compete with the most able and accomplished in the land, and win while they lose, if you have the soul power, and they rely solely on the meretricious stock in trade of the oratorical profession. No one need wait for education or outward advantages before he goes forth as a missionary to the world. As an impetuous mountain torrent, as a stream of burning lava descending with impetuous force down the side of an Etna or Vesuvius, compelling everything to make way before it, will be the power accompanying the voice of

the one who, because deeply in earnest, thoroughly convinced of the rectitude and reality of his mission, goes forth conquering and to conquer, ready to meet Goliath with only a sling and a stone, and yet, like David of old, bound to succeed, foreordained to victory.

There is a secret to be learned, whereby a simple sling and stone can be made to vanquish even the proudest, tallest and best-armed giant the world has ever seen; but the secret is not one to be learned except in the school of a life-long discipline, as it consists in the perfect triumph of the spirit over every carnal desire and intellectual ambition. We have all our vessels of water, and in order to convert their contents into the pure, rich wine of the spirit, we have only to take up the simplest means at our disposal, and see in our vocation, ability and situation, the best possible means for accomplishing the divinest ends. Never sigh for the unattainable; never lay the flattering unction to your souls that you would be great and noble, if you only had the chance; never argue that if you were only rich in this world's goods, you would do a great deal of good. It is the disposition to do good that creates the opportunity. Truly, you cannot, out of your own funds, feed the hungry and clothe the naked, if you have no money. But do the poor and friendless need nothing but creature comforts? If these were all in all, would children in well-regulated institutions pine to death for lack of love, as they often do?

You can all give love, and in your giving this, the highest and best of all gifts, you may rely upon it that, whether on earth you make the discovery or not, you will find out in eternity that no one ever went through the world praying and working to bless others out of the deep sincerity of an honest, tender heart, without having set in motion through the contagion of earnestness and sympathy the very machinery necessary to provide for the wants of the body, when the needs of the spirit were first supplied.

circumference to the centre. The natural or rather the carnally-minded, undeveloped man looks at everything from the point of view of sense, while the spiritual or spiritually unfolded mind views everything from the point of view of spirit; there is, therefore, an inevitable contradiction in testimony; the senses affirm what the soul denies, the soul affirms what the senses deny. Longfellow expresses this conflict most graphically when he says "things *are* not what they seem;" there is a reality of being and an unreality of seeming; this unreality we must always endeavor to forget, we must dispute it just as the astronomers whom the world once derided but now almost adore denied appearance and affirmed reality when they put to flight the false theories of those who, guided by appearance, declared the earth to be flat and the sun merely a ball of fire revolving round this little planet in every twenty-four hours, while as for the stars, they were only lamps hung up in the sky to illumine this little globe by night. No one can say that this theory of the sun, earth and stars was not in perfect harmony with the common sense of mankind; we doubt if there is a child to-day who, left entirely to himself to frame ideas concerning the universe based on outward observation solely, would not arrive at the same conclusion as that reached by the men whose theories Copernicus and Gallileo put to flight. These mighty minds were men of uncommon sense, of more than usual intelligence, research and intellectual ability; thus it is not common or ordinary, but uncommon or extraordinary development in humanity which, by differentiating certain individuals from the mass, gives to the world its enlightened and enlightening teachers; he is an uncommon man, his is an uncommon mind, are expressions we continually hear when celebrated personages are being spoken of; these uncommon men are a novelty, they create a sensation, they are a distinct variety of the *genus homo*, and are naturally regarded by the superstitious as sons of God in a

peculiar sense, they are not ordinary specimens of humanity, therefore, say the multitude, they cannot be merely men, they must be Gods, or if not divinities, then devils. The pendulum of popular appreciation, always oscillating violently between two distant extremes, is rarely found at equilibrium ; either a hero is escorted in triumphal procession into a nation's capital, borne on the shoulders of a populace shouting frantic hosannas and pouring benedictions into his ears, as we are told Jesus was led into Jerusalem five days before sentenced to death, or else the execrations ring in his ears, he is not fit to live, a robber even is preferable to him. In the first book of the Pentateuch we are introduced to man in a very rude and primitive condition of being ; he is described as naked and as having no occupation but agriculture ; he does not perceive a difference between good and evil, right and wrong ; and yet mingled with that story of primeval innocence and ignorance we catch glimpses of the writer's allusions to a terrestrial paradise where the human family were in a very high degree of moral perfection and physical enjoyment. To those who have read "*Ragnarök*," a truly wonderful work by Ignatius Donnelly, author of *Atlantis*, the thought will naturally occur that the early paradise may have been Atlantis, or some other once highly favored clime overtaken by a deluge or destroyed by collision with a comet ; and though there would no doubt be much truth in such backward historic glances, we have no intention of giving a discourse this morning on the world's condition in very ancient times except to say that in endeavoring to arrive at first principles, we cannot evade the conclusion that every race and every individual has started on his or its career at the very lowest point of intelligence and has gradually worked his way up to whatever summit of greatness he or it may by this time have arrived at. Now we will look at the Garden of Eden in two lights ; it doubtless refers to the infancy of the race and the infancy of the individual human spirit.

How did man originate? what was his earliest condition on earth? those questions are ever recurring and are always awaiting a full and final solution at the hands of science and religion.

We most certainly do not credit the story that man was originally created perfect and afterwards fell, except we use the word perfection with reference to innocence only; primeval man doubtless was perfectly innocent, innocent as a baby is innocent, but certainly not the glorious, intelligent being orthodoxy has made him out to be. In every individual human experience we note the difference between the purity of early childhood, which knows nothing of a distinction between right and wrong, and the purity of the experienced men or women in middle life who have endured the fierce trials and sharp temptations incident to an active career, but who instead of succumbing to these temptations and allowing these trials to overpower them have bravely resisted the adversary, and though the conflict was terrible indeed between the contending forces of their higher and lower nature, have succeeded in vanquishing the lower and gaining victory for the higher.

Everything natural is beautiful in its season, but nothing is really beautiful out of season; there is a time for the innocent amusements of childhood, a time for playing with pretty toys, but that time does not last always, indeed its duration is very short; fond but foolish parents doating over a charming infant may wish that their darling's infancy might last forever, but it is not so to be, nature has decreed otherwise; the child must grow to manhood or womanhood and endure the effort of growth; time will show of what metal the little one is made; he is now in a paradise of pristine innocence, he is in Eden and as yet unfallen, but the serpent has not yet spoken; there cannot therefore be any positive virtue or direct moral excellence in the child's purity, there may be many a weakness hidden beneath that fair exterior, many a fiery passion ready to ignite immediately the lucifer

match of temptation is applied to the barrel of gunpowder secreted in the undiscovered chambers of the mind ; we can only know if the child is well or ill disposed, prone to virtue or to vice, morally strong or weak when we see him in the crucible of temptation, undergoing the fiery discipline which will at length return him to the universe like burnished gold ready to shine with never tarnished brightness in the palace of eternity. We frequently hear the remark that such an one has lost virtue or character : we often wonder if they ever had any to loose ; may they not have been falsely accredited with possessions which were never theirs ? does not a large amount of negative untempted innocence pass as though it were positive tested virtue in society, and as one extreme always produces another, is it not a fact that popular opinion both applauds and hisses unjustly ? Plaudits are often won by those in whose success there is no evidence of genuine merit, while many an one is hissed off the stage of society who deserves sympathy, and only needs counsel, guidance and a friendly hand to lead him into the right path. Is not the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," often the shallowest mockery, even at times a blasphemy, when, instead of seeking to save their fellows from temptation and deliver them out of evil, the very persons who offer such petitions the most frequently are too often those who, if Jesus were on earth, would be classed by him with heathen who use vain repetitions and hypocrites whose frequent prayers but tend to their more certain condemnation ? Society cannot judge righteously to-day any more than it could eighteen or nineteen centuries ago, and therefore it ought not to undertake to judge at all ; its sole duty is to work for the reformation and education of those of its members who are not strong enough to do without the aids it can render them. Prisons, jails, penitentiaries, if we must have places called by such harsh names, should all be true reform schools, and a reformatory is only possible where every energy is concentrated upon developing and strengthening charac-

ter. Some censorious, self-appointed judges of their brethren, have said criminals have no claim upon society. What nonsense! criminals are a portion of society, a dangerous and difficult portion truly, but a diseased member of the frame which must be healed and not amputated, unless society wishes to be dwarfed and crippled forever after. Nothing and no one exists for naught, every creature and every function has a place to fill and a work to do, the only business of society is to render its best assistance to all its parts to do their duties normally and efficiently. Do not the members of the body serve each other, does not one work for another, all for each and each for all? there is no schism in the body, and when one member suffers the others set to work to relieve it, when one falls the others fly to its rescue and co-operate to raise the fallen one. Those who are strong must bear with the infirmities of the weak and help to strengthen them, thus only can we approximate toward that blessed consummation so devoutly to be longed for, the solidarity of humanity. We will ask you to observe in reading the Mosaic account of creation (or evolution if you prefer the word) the author says God blessed everything that He had made and pronounced it very good. The question is often asked, Is this the best possible world in the best possible universe? are there no defects in the scheme of being? are there not nuisances in the world for which no satisfactory reason can be assigned? is it necessary that there should be all the misery there is? may there not be a limit to the divine goodness and to the divine wisdom also? Such questions are very natural and they are hard to answer; we do not believe they can ever be satisfactorily answered except by those who have fought life's battle and won its crown; we do not think any one short of those who have attained to the summit of the hill up which suffering humanity is at present toiling can find an adequate reply to such inquiries as these, but those who have demonstrated the utility of all life's discipline, who have carried the heaviest burdens, borne the severest

trials, are those who are the readiest to acknowledge the goodness of the Eternal in the bitterest discipline of earth. We may ask, to employ the ancient metaphor of the serpent, why was there ever such a reptile in existence, why was a talking snake ever allowed to enter Eden? Well, the serpent figures as one of God's creatures, reptiles were pronounced very good when the general benediction was spoken, serpents must have their use or they would not be in existence, everything exists for some good purpose, the difficulty with which we have to contend is our inability to discover the purpose. We are informed at one time that God gave mankind permission to eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden, and further on we are told they were forbidden to eat the fruit of one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We do not intend to follow any translation of the Pentateuch verbally, nor contend for the literal infallibility of the book of Genesis; but this we will say, there is fully as much nonsense talked by those who are hostile to Genesis as by those who blindly accept every portion of its letter. Col. Ingersoll's "Mistakes of Moses" is one of the shallowest critical works we have ever read; it is an amusing satire, many passages in it are sparkling, witty, even brilliant, but no one who has the slightest comprehension of thoroughness of style could call them profound; such books provoke a laugh, they are amusing, but scarcely serious, but then the multitude would oftentimes far rather pay to laugh than to be instructed; mere sallies of wit are useless in earnest controversy, they may gain for one who indulges in them an outburst of applause, but all points made by satire are not made rationally, the emotions rather than the intellect are stirred by them, and it is to the intellect we must appeal in controversy; rhetoric and oratory are often used to cover up shallowness of argument, the world's greatest thinkers are invariably least given to display, fireworks of speech soon leave the mind in darkness and always give the other side an opportunity to get up an opposing display of rockets.

Let us see if we cannot get somewhere nearer the bed rock upon which these ancient traditions rest, and to do so let us forget the past and concentrate our thought upon the present. We have encountered a statement in a very ancient book to the effect that a certain act is justifiable at one time and unjustifiable at another, that is the simple outcome of the apparent discrepancy we have already noted; now in our daily experiences do we not feel certain things are right at one time and wrong at another? do we not feel justified at one time and condemned at another, though on the two occasions we have acted in precisely the same manner? We know there must be an absolute right in the universe, but our knowledge is relative, and thus our apprehension of right is limited, and we are doing right to the utmost of our ability when we are doing the best we can, but we feel we are doing wrong when we are not doing our best; our best is not a stationary but a progressive something, and we feel inwardly, and no sophistry can convince us to the contrary, that we are culpable when we sin against our own sense of right or honor. Now let us see how we can apply this rule to eating forbidden fruit. In the first place, we will ask what is meant by God telling Adam and Eve they may eat and they may not eat; the voice of God speaking to us is our own moral sense, our own sense of right is God's revelation in our spirits. Well, then, to eat the fruit of the tree when God says you may eat it is to act conscientiously, to obey the highest command we have heard delivered to us through our own souls, while to eat the fruit of the same tree when we hear God saying, "Thou shalt not eat it," is to act against the warning and entreaty of the divine voice within us. This interpretation is at once clear and comprehensible and reduces the entire matter of obedience and disobedience to a simple following or rebelling against our own moral sense; here we have deduced a moral lesson which can be taught in every home and school without entrenching upon the ground of controversial theology. Now let us

see if we can find the serpent and describe him so that we may all recognize him when he comes to tempt us. We are all conscious of what we term our higher and our lower natures. Swedenborg says there are three loves, and we may all agree there are also three voices in the heart of every human being. Now what is the voice of God but the voice of conscience, of duty, of the moral sense, and what is the voice of the serpent, but that of selfishness, self-interest, and inordinate self-indulgence? The serpent tempts Eve; now the serpent is the symbol of sensuality; it is a creeping, groveling thing from which we instinctively shrink. Fear of reptiles is common to mankind almost universally. Why are men afraid of snakes but because they are so sensual in their own minds? and the serpent, which is the most sensually powerful and fascinating, though in another sense repulsive of creatures, gains immense magnetic hold upon the human race when mankind are sensually inclined. We do not hesitate to affirm that when the sensual element is conquered in every human being snakes will disappear from the earth; and even now when serpents approach those in whom the sensual element is absent or completely under control they are powerless to harm such persons; not only have the adepts of India, whose long privations and severe mental discipline have converted into spiritualized beings, power to overcome the deadliness of serpents, but innocent children in whom the lower passions have never been aroused, and who have seemingly inherited a peculiarly spiritual organism, have played with dangerous reptiles, fed them and caressed them with perfect immunity from danger. The legends of the east and of ancient times have their parallels in modern experience; the only reason why all people cannot demonstrate the truth of those marvelous declarations of the gospel which refer to disciples of truth being able to take up serpents and be unharmed and to drink of deadly things without being poisoned is on account of the pervading materiality and sensuality of thought. Outward acts of purity are no

preventatives against contamination ; a pure mental state is the only absolute precautionary measure. We are willing to allow that our remarks on literal serpents may be regarded as something of a digression from the serpent of Genesis, which certainly was not a literal snake which once walked upright and was afterward doomed to creep and crawl in the dust because of its perfidy in tempting Eve to sin ; but as we have already remarked, Eve is the symbol of the affections and the serpent is a type of the sensual nature. To spiritual facts there are no limits of time or space ; the serpent which beguiled Eve was beguiling Corinthian converts to Christianity when Paul was writing his epistles eighteen centuries ago, and the same serpent is beguiling multitudes this very hour. The serpent is in man, and whenever the voice of the inward talking snake is heard, and whenever the subtleties of wordly sophistry persuade the affections to forget the command of the Most High and worship idols of sense, doing evil that good may come, the serpent is heard to speak, and unfortunately, poor weak human nature is allured by the serpent's voice and vainly endeavors to excuse submission to the tempter on the grounds of knowledge being gained by yielding to its enslaving charms. The serpent who at first walks upright and is afterwards degraded and compelled henceforth to adopt a groveling attitude is the animal nature of mankind ; the physical world and the physical man exist for a purpose ; in the wise economy of the Infinite, they have their place and mission ; there are no bad desires, no evil faculties originally or ultimately, evil is only possible where there is inversion or perversion of good. Phrenologists are bringing out this fact whenever they examine a head or fill in a chart intelligently ; they assign functions and duties to every organ ; phrenology informs you that no organ is superfluous or vile, but where one is inflamed and another depressed, there alone is the cause of evil to be discerned. The serpent in the human head

is at the base of the brain, but may be said to stretch over a wider area than that covered exclusively by what are denominated animal propensities; acquisitiveness, ambition, self-esteem, love of approbation, as well as secretiveness, amativeness, destructiveness, and combativeness, may be said to be in the serpent's territory; but as there is a serpent in the skies, brilliant, lustrous, glorious, so the unfallen serpent in man, by some physiologists intimately associated with the backbone, is in its rightful place and condition an upright creature "very good." The length of the backbone is regarded by many anatomists as a gauge of sensuality, just as a fullness at the base of the brain is a phrenological indication of dominant animal tendencies. Now a backbone is a very necessary part of the human structure, but a backbone may be disproportionately long, so much so as to be inconvenient and almost tending to malformation of the body; in mind, which is the sole cause and producer of physical structures, we find the hidden causes of all protruberances and deficiencies; the outward frame is but an index of the mind, a reflection of the hidden self which molds and fashions it, changing it with its continual variations in impulse and growth. Now, are there not many impulses of our nature, excellent in themselves, which lead us and others into a quagmire of degradation if we yield to them as rulers when they ought to be made to obey implicitly as servants? Take the illustration of a captain and his crew; no ship can be properly manned without a sufficient crew, there are so many works to be done and places to be filled, and so many men are needed for these varied offices. No one would think of sending a vessel out across the ocean with only a captain; a captain and crew are necessary for every ship and every voyage; now comparing human life to a voyage across the ocean, man is the ship, the divine soul whose voice is heard in conscience or the moral sense is the general, captain or commander, the soul is the supreme director,

the head officer ; all other elements in man are subordinate officials ; the intellectual powers and the various affections are all officers and have sailors under them ; the animal faculties can only rightly fill the most humble stations ; they are only adapted to the posts of servants ; when they command, but refuse to serve, mutiny, confusion, loss, risk, danger, are all inevitable. The captain alone, with chart and compass at his disposal and adequate knowledge of both, is an efficient commander. Mutiny has wrecked many a fair vessel on the high seas even when favorable winds were blowing ; rebellion against due and lawful authority always was, and still is, the cause of myriads of disasters ; the old biblical legend of rebellious angels and rebellious men forfeiting their happiness, and speedily coming to grief, entailing upon themselves and others a long train of almost endless miseries, is a story founded on the unalterable facts of nature ; where there is no head, a house falls to pieces ; no government can stand without presiding officers, no body can live or be directed without a head. The head in man's spiritual being is the indwelling divinity, the spark of divine fire which, quenchless in its flame, is the only absolutely immortal part of man's being. In the Fourth Gospel, the personal Jesus is confounded with the esoteric Christ, the word or *logos*, the universal light, the illuminator of all souls everywhere. Jesus as a person might be a mythical character without altering the true value and significance of the gospels. A principle of truth, a demonstration of the powers and possibilities of the soul of man, are the vital issues. Jesus is in the world's history as a typical and transcendent character. The main parts of his life are of more divided application ; the characters grouped around him are to be found represented in the modern world ; they are all round about us at this moment. We can easily discover the impetuous Peter in those who though zealous, almost to a fault, cannot stand the fiery test of persecution without

faltering and failing; they deny the truth when most it needs their friendship and their loyalty to its representatives, but being at heart sincere, the very fact of their denial urges them on through the gates of tearful penitence to stand erect in future.

Such persons are too certain of themselves; while the sea is comparatively calm, they row recklessly, they deny their weaknesses in their own strength, not in the invincible might of confidence in higher power; they are too self-satisfied, too boastful, warm hearted, wishful to be loyal it is true, but liable at any moment to betray the master whom they have sworn to serve; they always recover from relapses, they get up stronger after their falls; but pride always goes before abasement, and we must indeed humble ourselves to secure true exaltation. Judas Iscariot is a much lower type of mind than Peter, but he is not the heartless, cold-blooded villian he has usually been represented as being. To say that he identified himself with the apostolic band as a money-making speculation, that as keeper of the purse or bag he stole from its contents and thereby enriched himself, is almost ridiculous when we remember the saying of the Master, "Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head;" no avaricious money grubber would associate himself with so impecunious a master; had he amassed a comfortable sum by stealing he would never have sold his teacher for thirty pieces of silver (a silver shekel was a very small amount of money) and then have ended his mortal existence in despair after throwing down the thirty pieces of silver; he was not a man in whom all sense of honor was dead, he repented his deed when it was too late to revoke it; he was a doer of evil that good might come; his policy was the fatal one so much in vogue to-day,—ends justify means: they do not; he doubtless loved his teacher in a certain sense and wished to serve him, but selfishness and false policy ate like canker into his very spirit.

Could he obtain money by false manœuvres and at the same time give Jesus an opportunity of demonstrating his superiority to all external things? If Jesus would only work a miracle and evade his persecutors, Judas would have the money and a great triumph would be secured for truth. He does not, however, dare to mention the plot to Jesus; avarice no doubt gains the ascendancy over conviction in his mind, but Jesus the all-knowing makes no attempt to thwart his plans; he will work miracles of healing to save and bless others, himself he does not try to save; he recognizes that when a divine power is given into the hands of humanity, it is sinful to turn it to one's own personal advantage; to employ superhuman power to evade a trial and protect one's self from the world's persecution is only magic, it does not evidence either divine fortitude or perfect trust in the naked power of truth; God and one are always a majority. Jesus was not afraid of those who could only kill the outward body; should they work their fiercest vengeance on him, he would show forth his power in demonstrating immortality, not in averting a material catastrophe; he must and will stand his trial, he will bring truth and error face to face and compel them to confront each other; flight would be but cowardice; good and evil, light and darkness, purity and foulness, must compete for the palm of victory; thus when conspirators beset his pathway, when his every step was dogged by enemies, he would still present himself in the open thoroughfares; he gave his enemies no difficulty in capturing him, but we are told the majesty of his mien, the nobility of his presence, awed them into respect and they could not take him though they were armed with authority from the chief priests and rulers and he offered no resistance. The disciples slept in Gethsemane; they forsook him and fled as the heights of Calvary loomed in the distance. Jesus must experience the bitterest woe of which the heart is capable; friends who desert one are far crueler than the grave; to

be left alone by comrades in an hour of peril is bitterer by far than to see our dearest laid beneath the sod; but in the supreme moment of the soul's conflict it must fight the battle alone and single handed, even God apparently withdraws his help, angels have hidden their faces behind the clouds, not a ray of azure peeps through the dark curtain which enfolds the universe to the vision of the martyred heart; it is all darkness, above, below, around, within. There is no unbelief, no halting in the bitter cry, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? only a prayer for light, only a petition for an explanation of a deep and awful mystery. In that heartrending cry all the agonized complaints of humanity seem summed up; it reverberates through the ages, it trembles on the lips of every sufferer. Oh! why is life so full of pain, why are the thorns so sharp? why is there no light enabling us to see the good in sorrows? The answer comes at last, the sentence "It is finished," is a note of triumph, and Luke's remembrance of the final chord in the requiem, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," is the record of the ending of the eclipse. Jesus has triumphed where we must all triumph, on a cross nailed to the hard unyielding wood 'twixt earth and heaven; when we are crucified we are suspended in mid-air, we hang between the sordid unrealities of earth and the glorious realities of heaven; the cross becomes a throne, and they who in the early church represented Jesus crucified with a diadem above his brow, exaltation and triumph beaming from his eyes, saw the man of sorrows transfigured as he was in spirit and gazed upon the ineffable victory which only his crucifixion could make possible. A poet truly says, "Every heart must know its Calvary." Gethsemane is a fairer garden than Eden, it yields the rich ripe fruitage of the vine, the grapes are there outpressed, the wine is there distilled; in Eden are the seeds, but for Gethsemane are the fruits reserved. The practical application of our subject is our main desire; we propose to undertake the

difficult and often thankless task of trying to point out to you the benefits of trial, the blessedness of suffering. Suffering is certainly among the inevitables of mortal existence; complaining against it can never alleviate, but must on the contrary aggravate and intensify its power; we can, it is true, rise superior to it by purely spiritual methods, we can advance to a point in our moral progress where it has no power to harm us; but until we have gained the victory over our lower selves, what we term evil as well as good will be ever present with us. We are told of Jesus in his agony in the garden vanquishing the lower will completely; there were two natures, two voices struggling for supremacy; one will battles against the other, the calm and noble sufferer looks beyond the mortal to the immortal, beyond the personal desire to the supreme purpose of the eternal. Father, not my will but thine be done, is the prayer of every soul in conflict conscious of a higher and a lower motive and wishful to surrender all to the highest. At first there may be doubt, darkness and disquietude; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, is the natural outcry of the bruised and breaking spirit, but when the revelation is made that it is not possible for the cup to pass until its contents are quaffed even to the dregs, the prayer is changed to a cry of perfect resignation; then an angel appears on the scene and the martyred heart is strengthened. It is often only suffering that reveals the angels who are ever the helpmeets of humanity; there is an angel behind every trial, trials are often only the shadows cast by approaching angels; when we can look above our trials, when we can see beyond them to the glorious results of all life's pain, then the shadows flee, the morning dawns; heaviness has endured but for a night, and joy has appeared on the wings of a new-born day. When we can see our trials in the light of blessings and not murmur or repine, the victory of our spirits is surely close at hand.

19

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION.

THE return of springtime always brings with it naturally a revival of the sweetest hopes and deepest joys of human nature. The heart of man in springtime is naturally joyous; all nature rejoices around him, and he cannot but participate in the general anthem of thanksgiving, and unite his voice with the universal pæan of praise.

Easter, as a distinctly Christian festival, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, is only a continuation of a long line of festivals which have antedated the Christian era. In ancient Egypt at the time of the vernal equinox every year, special celebrations were held in honor of the triumphs of the sun over the wintry constellations. The sign Aries, the ram, was always regarded by the ancients as the sign of promise; and as hope and expectation, the joyful anticipation of future pleasures not yet realized, but certain to appear in due course, must ever constitute the leading elements in genuine happiness—as no one's cup of happiness can ever be said to be full if there is no hope in it (for if hope departs all joy flies with it, while if hope remains the bitterest sorrows can be bravely endured)—it is but natural that the season of the year which specially portrays hope should be everywhere regarded as the most sacred season, the dearest of all to the hearts of humanity.

The twenty-fifth of December, regarded by many as the holiest day of all the year, is in every sense a festival of hope; the year is an infant then, Christmas Day being the natural New Year's Day which no civil calendar can change; the Christ-child whose birth is celebrated then is but an infant destined to grow in stature and wisdom—his life lies before him, and the world expects great

things from that life ; but at Easter, three or four months later, hope has assumed a deeper tint, a far more roseate hue ; the storms of winter, the dangers and weaknesses of childhood have been successfully encountered — the year is now a young man, quite a youth still, in all the bloom and freshness of dawning manhood, but still strong enough to be capable of yielding a plentiful harvest of bright and promising things which, in the course of nature, are destined to blossom in the ripe fruits yet in store for the individual and for humanity. Christmas has always been celebrated especially as a children's festival. Christmas trees and children's parties at that season are always eagerly looked forward to by the little ones ; and the old folks are always specially remembered at that season, as a birthday speaks to the very young and the very old alike ; to the former it holds out the prospect of long and happy life in this world — to the latter it suggests the new birth, the awakening to the larger activities of spirit-life when the material body has been thrown aside. Easter speaks to young men and maidens ; to the older boys and girls ; it is a time of weddings and of introductions into society everywhere. The year is out of the nursery — it has left its primary school, and is about to take a new step in life. And does not Easter also speak to mourners with most vivid distinctness ? for though it is all alive with the springtide festivities of this sublunary sphere, it is forever pointing to that brighter and more glorious springtime which shall follow upon the dissolution of all the ties of the senses and open up new vistas of life immortal in the glorious Summer-Land beyond the clouds and death's dark, chilling river.

The story of the resurrection of Jesus as told by the Evangelists is full of hope and glad suggestiveness ; in its old literal dress it has suggested so much of darkness, difficulty and limitation to the human mind, that the joy-bells pealing on Easter morn must have sounded jangled, harsh and out of tune, to those who could not see a universal light, an all-pervading truth in the story so often

rehearsed, which yet in many circles where its letter was idolized was so little understood in any spiritual sense. Let us think of Jesus as a typical hero, a representative of the human soul; let us think of the thirty-three years of his earthly life, and especially of the last three of them, as typical of the experiences through which all must pass ere they can reach the glories of a spiritual resurrection: First, there is a cross to be borne, then a crown to be worn. There can be no Easter Sunday without a Good Friday—and the very darkest day in man's experience in the whole cycle of his education for eternity is emphatically a *good* day. Nothing is easier than to persuade the happy and the prosperous that all is for the best; but to preach this gospel to the poor and wretched seems like cold, hard, unsympathetic mockery, unless the preacher is one who has gone through some bitter experience which he can relate to his hearers, and has experienced therefrom a blessing which no other discipline could impart.

We always feel chary of commissioning those whose lives have been almost entirely passed in sunshine to go forth and preach the most glowing optimism to those whose circumstances almost compel them to be pessimists; some people are too sparkling, too full of untempered joy; they have had too few temptations, trials and difficulties to qualify them to bear the glad news of Goodness Supreme in the universe to their oppressed fellow-beings who have never tasted of such joy. The true counselor must be one who has been wounded in life's battle, but the wounds must have closed; he must have passed through many a saddening discipline, but have come out conqueror over all; he must be able to exhibit scars in hands, and feet, and side, and yet those scars must not only have healed—they must have grown luminous, and become signs of glory, the result of former pain. The world of Asia turns to Gautama, and the world of Europe and America to Jesus, because these two heroes have been placed in history as the two whose lives were most representative of human conflict and subse-

quent victory. No matter how much margin may be allowed for legend, tradition, or anything else partly real and partly fanciful, the great moving principle, the underlying fact in both these histories, remains eternally true: man suffers to enjoy; he bleeds, that the sweetness of his soul may be exhaled. The very oldest book in the Bible, the book of Job—a strange old poem of great antiquity—no matter who or what it refers to as a fragment of literal history, takes up this same great truth, and interweaves its golden thread into all the tangled skein of human misery and perplexity. Job is rich at the beginning, but richer far at the close of his career; he is good at the beginning, but vastly better at the close; and what agent is employed to enrich and to improve him? Why, none other than Satan, the accuser, the very impersonation of all the trials and troubles of mortal existence; what are the means used to bring this ancient patriarch to the glorious summit whereon at length he stands? not joy, peace, plenty and prosperity, but misery of the deepest and most abject kind. At times he loses faith in God, in every one, in everything; he feels as though all had forsaken him; his friends turn against him; his advisers tell him to curse the Eternal, and put an end to his own miserable existence—but he rises on the wings of spiritual perspective, and exclaims: “I know that my Redeemer [vindicator] liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth, and though worms destroy this body, yet in [or out of] my flesh shall I see God.” Then when his trials are over he exclaims, addressing the Eternal Goodness which governs all things: “I have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee.” What shall we say of this complicated utterance of a very ancient people, and a very ancient time? what shall we say of the confounding in the text of the two ideas of seeing deliverance in the flesh and out of the flesh? It always seems to us that the great ideas are far too large for words; human modes of expression break down under the weight of infinite ideas; words are *arbitrary, mechanical, material*, and the soul cannot voice

all it has to say in them. Music is better than speech; "songs without words" tell tales no words can tell; a spiritual revelation in words will always be faulty and ambiguous because so painfully limited. Spiritual revelation is a torrent of new wine, fresh, young, vigorous — words are poor old bottles, dry, withered skins, in which the truths of the spirit are placed by man. The wine cannot ferment, the ideas cannot turn themselves round and display their many-sidedness in the narrow groove of speech, and then the poor old words have to be altered and mended, and we have an amended Bible text, and revision committees conning over Greek and Hebrew, Syriac and Chaldaic manuscripts, to find the living truth of being, while God all the while is just as ready to speak a word to any modern mind, ready to hear and to receive his message, as he ever was to any favored man or tribe of old. We do not consult the past because its records are infallible; we do not employ metaphors and use illustrations because they are exhaustive, but when endeavoring to give utterance to what is beyond utterance we feel as many an artist feels whose canvas is of the best he can procure, but, he being spiritual and the canvas material, his conception is ever superior to the best he can portray for outward eyes to see.

All spiritual revelations are intensely eloquent in what they do *not* say: they suggest infinitely more than they express; their imperfections and omissions compel us to think and strive and get the remainder, to find the missing blocks without which the puzzle is incomplete; and it does us infinite good to write our own bibles, to be our own prophets and our own priests, our own rulers and our teachers; behind everything lies a great impenetrable mystery which we dare not call unknowable, but we must call unknown; into this untried well we must drop our bucket, into this unsounded ocean we must let down our line. There seems to us far more allegory than history in the gospel tale that the disciples of Jesus were mostly fishermen, and he would make them into "fishers of men," — that is, they were inquiring minds, they were

seekers after knowledge, and it seemed miraculous in their eyes that one hundred and fifty-three fish were caught immediately they let down the net on the right side of the boat, while hitherto they had toiled all night and caught nothing. There is a right side of the boat in which we all are; there is a way of letting down our net that we may catch fish, and there is a way of fishing, blundering on blindly and yet honestly, but catching nothing. How often we see this illustrated in daily life: take a scholar in arithmetic figuring away hour after hour till his head aches and his eyes are red, and his whole frame quivering with nervous excitement because he cannot solve his problem. There is a way of accomplishing that result, but he cannot find it—there is an answer to it, a correct result which some one has found out and published in a manual, but the student tries in vain; he is not working in the right way. The teacher should never chide such an one; the true teacher always enlightens, he makes the pupil do the work, he does not work out the problem for him, but he shows him how to work out for himself, he gives him the rule whereby the problem can be solved.

The physical resurrection, when viewed in a gross, material light, is positively repulsive; the reanimation of scattered dust at the last great day is an odious idea, and no one can so poetize as to make it agreeable, without leaving the letter and getting into the spirit of the idea. The human body or physical organism is so constituted as to have no permanence or stability at all in and of itself; as long as it is connected with the spirit it appears to live, but it is moved and guided by a force extraneous to itself; when this subtle force, usually called "life" or "vitality," is removed, the structure passes into decay; it is neither permanent in a living or dead, healthy or unhealthy condition—it is perpetually changing, molecules are retiring before other molecules incessantly. It would, therefore, be impossible for a rational mind to conceive of a resurrection of the body unless he believed in something stationary in the body, a point of

rest around which all changes move but which is never agitated itself. If there be a physical microcosma, and this is indestructible and unchanging, then the deathless human body is a microscopic affair, entirely eluding all sensuous research. Some eminent naturalists, notably those of France, have suggested this idea, but so totally distinct is it from the dogma of corporeal resuscitation as taught by Orthodox churchmen that the latter would instantly repudiate it as a pestilential heresy. Nevertheless, many years ago, in the Established Church of England, we have heard clergymen of unquestioned soundness maintain their belief in a physical resurrection based on the supposition of there being some vitalizing and unchanging particle of substance in the human organism, around which, on the Judgment day, a new material organism will be formed; but practically this doctrine tends to a belief in what is known as reëmbodiment, and not to an acceptance of the theological dogma of a bodily resurrection at the last great day.

In a purely spiritual sense the resurrection of Jesus meant nothing more than his rising superior to all the difficulties which encompassed him while yet in the flesh, and the future establishment of his kingdom as a spiritual but not an earthly hierarchy.

Now let us look for a moment at the condition of the people among whom Jesus moved. His own chosen disciples, his intimate followers and closest friends, misunderstood him. Peter on more than one occasion urged him to use worldly policy, and showed himself unable to bear the test imposed by a perfect surrender to a spiritual ideal; the very air of Palestine was heavy with revolt; the people were positively aching for battle; they were resolved to fight. The action of Peter in cutting off the ear of Malchus was typical of the firm hold the prevailing false belief in the expediency of material weapons had gained upon the populace. A great reformer must stand alone; he had a few half-supporters; they admired him and loved him, but they failed to comprehend him; what could have been their dismay when, at the last, they saw

him fall into the hands of his enemies and heard him sentenced to death? The story of the resurrection, full of hope and joy as it is, can never have been built upon the legend of the Nazarites that Jesus was taken down from the cross and secretly restored to life by the kindly services of a mystic brotherhood to which he belonged, for such narratives contain no account of victory or triumph after this resurrection from apparent but not actual dissolution. One of these stories says Jesus was an invalid for six months and then died; where was the triumph in such an unsuccessful attempt to prolong his earthly career? We can imagine the joy of the disciples at finding him restored to them, even for so brief a time, from the very jaws of death, but no spiritual triumph is here!

We are told in the gospels of the raising of Lazarus and of the raising of a widow's son, of the daughter of Jairus and of a centurion's servant; but in all these instances it is the power of spirit over matter, of life over death, that is complimented — the persons resurrected are never spoken of afterwards; but when Mary Magdalene is resurrected spiritually from the dominion of evil to the freedom of righteousness she figures prominently in the history of the gospels till their very close. A too material view of resurrections does not and cannot raise any one's thoughts from earth to heaven, from lower to higher things; the reanimation of a corpse can never be a demonstration of immortality, and the gospels do not tell us that those who were reanimated never died again.

At the present time far too much stress is laid on healing the body; the great work for the spiritual teacher to set about is healing the mind and reforming the disposition. It would be far more glorious in the annals of true miracles to witness the record of a spiritual than a material result following upon spiritual treatment for disease. The diseases we are most anxious to eradicate are not tumors, cancers, consumption and other physical ailments; terrible though they are, and thankful though we are when we hear of their being overcome by the power

of spirit, we would far rather cure lying, theft, adultery, malice, revenge, murder, and all the black list of crimes, the record of which converts the daily newspaper into a stream of refuse when it might be a river of crystal water, chronicling the good instead of the evil deeds of men. As long as an account of murder will sell a paper quicker than any record of benevolent action, so long as the latest divorce case, with all its hideous accompaniment of scandal and vituperation, will exhaust an edition of a newspaper more rapidly than the most instructive matter from the ablest pens in the world, we are indeed remote from a millennium of spirituality. The states of mind producing such morbid appetites surely need to be treated spiritually and scientifically, and when spiritual science can lay its finger upon the root of human injustice and uncharitableness, the removal of these fruitful parents of a million ills will so tranquilize, harmonize and enlighten human understanding that physical health and longevity will naturally follow upon improved mentality. We must not strive too eagerly after the external; the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness must ever be sought first, and then all necessary external blessings will be added in good time and in the best way.

We are not prepared to deny even a physical resurrection; an infallible test of death satisfactory to scientific minds has yet to be produced; many persons have been buried in trances, and have come to life after their bodies were in the coffin: others have been tortured at hearing those around them speaking of their funeral and making all arrangements for their interment while yet they have been thoroughly conscious of all that was transpiring around them, though utterly unable to speak or make any sign; even their breath seemed suspended, apparently the heart had stopped its beating. In the face of many such well-authenticated cases as are now on record of restoration to life after prolonged entrenchment, it would be futile to make the endeavor to convince the public that any one had ever been raised to life after he was really dead, as the convenient hypothesis of ap-

parent death could always be brought in to refute the miracle; and were this wonderful phenomenon of raising the dead literally a verifiable fact it would fall miserably far short of proving the immortality of man. Jesus as God could not prove the immortality of the human soul; he could only do so as man — so say all theologians; the human spirit and the human body are all we can lay claim to — thus it would be no evidence of our resurrection, even though God, or a being totally distinct from ourselves, should rise, after real or seeming dissolution. But what do we really need in an hour of doubt and sorrow? Do we feel satisfied with evidences of immortality furnished to other minds? It would be cold comfort indeed for a mother, sorrowing over the loss of a beloved child, to be told that certain eminent personages were convinced of a conscious hereafter: she could not see with their eyes or understand with their intellects: but if, on the other hand, all the presumed *savants* of the world were to call a solemn council and deliberate on immortality and report against its truth, at the very moment they were issuing their pretentious doctrine, couched in the grandiloquent language of the schools, pronouncing life after death a mere delusion, some poor orphan, widow or bereaved parent might be the welcome recipient of tidings from the spirit-life, convincing beyond a peradventure of the falsity of the theologians' and the scientists' stilted manifesto. A company of blind men might gather to deny the existence of color; a company of deaf men might pass a verdict pronouncing every one who pretended to hear anything insane; but would the facts of sound and color be altered thereby in the estimation of those who saw and heard? If you have eyes, you do not ask if Mr. Huxley has admitted that anything is red in the world; if you have ears to hear, you do not wait to know if Herbert Spencer believes in the existence of sounds produced by the singing of birds. If either of those most able and learned gentlemen were to deny color, you would pronounce him afflicted with color-blindness and tender your sympathy for his affliction; if the other

would deny sound, you would feel sorrow at his deafness. Might as well, however, accept the verdict against sound or color given by a deaf or blind man, as take the trouble to employ learned committees to fathom for us the mysteries of Spiritualism. Psychic research is as much an individual matter as the action of the sunshine; we are all psychical beings, more or less unfolded on our physical side, and are as capable of making psychical as physical discoveries. We want to know the truth for ourselves concerning our spiritual being; we want to hear our own spiritual hearts beat, and feel our own spiritual pulses throb; we want to see and hear with our spiritual eyes and ears, and can be satisfied with nothing short of a personal spiritual revelation.

It was just this personal demonstration of immortality to the women who came to the sepulchre before daybreak on the first Easter Sunday, and to the disciples later on the same day and during succeeding days, that constituted that proof palpable of immortality for which they were so eagerly hungering and thirsting. Their beloved Lord and teacher appeared to them in such a manner that though at first they may have doubted whether it was really he who stood before them or another; though there may have been a shadow of doubt lingering in the minds of some even after the most marvelous phenomenon (though "they believed on him but some doubted,"

they have expressed the state of feeling common even during the forty days when he was wont to appear to them so mysteriously and yet so convincingly), we cannot see that no one interpretation of the manner of his appearance can be made explanatory of all the recorded facts. It is invariably the case that diverse manifestations are given by one and the same spirit to meet the requirements of varied states and conditions of mind. Let us look over a few of the leading incidents in the Gospel story, and see if we cannot discern where the dimly light is most conspicuous, and even the shadow deepest, at least a glimmering of bright, spiritual light. Mary Magdalene does not know Jesus when he first appears to

her ; she mistakes him for the gardener. Now if he appears to her at all, why does he not appear in a manner distinctly recognizable ? why mystify or confuse her ? why not give the clearest and most unmistakable manifestation of his presence ? To bring the matter down to these times, why does not a revelation from spirit-life come to the world in so undisguised a form that no one can reject it, unless willfully ? Surely because the majority of men and women are so immured in sense, so devoted to the pursuits and pleasures of material life, so ultra-physical in their demands, that a revelation coming to them in the form in which they would most readily receive it, would often confirm them in materiality rather than lift them to a higher plane of spiritual perception. Now imagine for a moment a demonstration of spirit-life wholly sensuous in its presentation, the senses the only objects of appeal — would such a revelation, if constantly repeated, do anything more than re-embody a departed friend ? Would it, could it, lift the spectators to a higher plane of thought and action, and could it qualify them for a spiritual manner of life in the eternal world ? It often strikes us as very sad to see so many test-hunters, greedy for some material exhibition of spirit-power, brought face to face with so much external paraphernalia representing the truth of immortality so far as it can be represented to bodily sense — forgetting altogether that the time must come for them when they can no longer converse with materialized spirits ; they must at some time throw aside all these material chattels and either recognize their friends in spirit or not recognize them at all. These outward likenesses all wear away in eternity ; proofs considered indubitable when sense is judge, melt away into nothingness when tested at the bar of spirit. We must be able to discern spiritually the things of the spirit ; we must undergo a spiritual transformation ; we must leave the grub and chrysalis conditions of the mind in the sepulchre in which worldly ambitions are buried, and rise to a new life, to the full possession of other faculties than *bodily* ones, or immortality despite all external proofs *still* remains the algebraic x — the unknown quantity.

We often hear people say : " I believe, and yet I doubt." " I sometimes have my doubts," is a very common expression ; belief is not enough ; it is unsatisfactory : " I believe in God ; I believe in immortality ; I believe in spirit communion," these are inadequate phrases ; they are stamped unmistakably with insufficiency. You have no doubt often heard revivalists talk about " finding Christ," and has it not often struck you how much more satisfactory it must be to find Christ than simply to believe in Christ ? creeds are never enough to content the spirit ; " Credo," " I believe," must be set aside for " Scio," " I know," ere the spirit can enter into rest.

Now evidences to sense are inadequate from the very nature of the case. We can think beyond sense ; we know how delusive and illusive outward appearances frequently are ; we know how often we are forced to admit the truth of Longfellow's assertion : " Things are not what they seem." Sunrise and sunset, the fixity and repose of the earth, the existence of a firmament and of a horizon, are all apparent, but unreal. What we discern with our senses we often discern untruly, and yet when such meditations as these lead us to the brink of a most pathetic infidelity we are at once comforted as we reflect upon the errors arising from the false judgments of sense being all errors of limitation — not one of them an error of exaggeration. How small the sun appears to be — how large it really is ; how little the stars look, and yet how great they are ; there is always a transcendent, overarching reality, whose immensity appalls us by its very majesty when we think there is only some little world which we can measure with our one-foot rule. Of one thing we are as certain as of our own existence, and that is, the infinite superiority of life to everybody's opinions of it. Is life worth living ? Yes, and a million times more worth living than the happiest, wisest and most hopeful person can ever imagine it to be. Is love immortal ? are our affections deathless ? Yes, and a million times more blessedly so than it hath entered into the human heart to conceive ; we must lose the shadow

to grasp the substance, and let us beware lest in our too great eagerness to grasp the shadow we do not imitate the folly of the dog in the fable who lost his good, wholesome piece of meat through falling fanatically in love with its shadow in the water. Do not let us prize our outward blessings so highly that in the idolatry of sense we blunt those only perceptions which can unlock for us the treasures of the immortal world.

Jesus makes himself known to Mary by a word; he speaks to her, and though she does not recognize his outward appearance, she feels intuitively that it is really he. She answers him at once. Intuition is beyond reason; where reason fails, there intuition comes to the rescue; intuition is the all-embracing sense of spirit—the fount whence all the senses of the body flow; how often do we err, and that grievously, because we turn away from intuition to follow the uncertain light of reason; what we call reason is the lower reason—intuition is the higher reason, it is angelic, divine reason. Our intuitions tell us more than our intellects can discover, with all their searchings. Intuition detects love, truth, in a word everything immortal; it sees through shams as easily as men look through glass; it reveals truth at once; it knows, it speaks with the authority of knowledge, and when we hear it we are convinced. The intuitive faculty is necessary for the true discernment of spirits; ordinary clairvoyance may see a form, and describe it, but it takes intuition to know whether that form is an honest representation of a reality behind it, or only a mask invented to cover up deception. You cannot deceive a truly intuitive person; lies are of no avail; misrepresentations are seen through at a glance; this gift alone enables us to be absolutely sure of truth—this alone enables us to *know* ourselves immortal.

In the far Orient, where introspection is a daily habit among the natives, this inner faculty asserts itself far more than in the Western world, for the reason that earnest efforts are always rewarded, and every power is brought out by the endeavor to exercise it. If people were only less material, less gross, less bound up in the trivialities

of material routine — if they would but devote some portion of their time and energy to acknowledging the spiritual side of their nature, such an outburst of heavenly music, such a revelation of spiritual truth, would be the result that there would be no more work for Psychic Research Societies to do; men would individually fathom the problem which these blundering, would-be scientists are vainly endeavoring to solve.

Many of the more advanced among liberal religious teachers of the present are taking the ground that the important side of the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus is that side which leaves controversy of a historical nature altogether, and declares the satisfactoriness of a spiritual conviction borne in upon the minds of the disciples, that their master was truly alive and could make his presence felt among them. No matter whether he did or did not appear to them physically, he most certainly revealed himself to them spiritually; they were then convinced of human immortality, and no longer indulged the hope of a material kingdom, but transferred their anticipations to realms beyond the skies and to the spiritual triumphs of truth on earth among men.

Now let us see how this interpretation will work with reference to the daily difficulties and sorrows of this present world? Here is a bereaved mother wringing her hands in uncontrollable sorrow; she has lost her only darling child; she cannot lay hold upon the truth of immortality; she fears her darling may have perished. Night after night she sighs and moans, making the midnight air groan with her lamentations; neither science nor religion can give her any comfort; she cannot obtain any relief from the sympathy of friends; neither the Bible nor any other book can help her; she is on the verge of insanity through despair. One night she dreams a delightful dream; she sees her child bending over her; she hears his voice, she is convinced he is with her, and although it is only a dream, it is an angel's visit. When she awakes, her load has gone; she is a new woman; henceforth she looks to her hours of rest with the pleas-

ing expectation of another such experience ; even if another never comes, one has been enough to convince her of the continued life of her beloved, and if she is not to see him again on earth she knows that death will restore him to her arms. There is the balm of Gilead, there is the true physician for the mind ; it is enough for her to feel she *knows* ; other people may dispute her, even pronounce her demented ; what matters that to her ? She cannot but pity them. She has had evidence of her darling's resurrection. But in using the word resurrection, let us be careful that we do not misapply it. Thomas Lake Harris in one of his poems says, "Death is the wondrous second birth, th' unveiling of the soul." Such a statement cannot be accepted unqualifiedly. Swedenborg speaks of man's resurrection in a spiritual body immediately after the material form is left behind. Clairvoyants have often watched the spiritual (or as Theosophists would term it, the astral) body emerge from the physical at the time of earthly decease.

The Apostle Paul and Swedenborg both speak of man as having two bodies, one material, the other spiritual. Swedenborg says the spiritual body is enclosed in the material during man's earthly lifetime, but is liberated at the moment of death. We are not prepared to contest these views ; we simply claim that there is a deeper and higher truth in the doctrine of resurrection than can be compressed within the limits of these doctrines, accurate though they may be ; and no set of persons would be more willing to acknowledge this higher truth than consistent disciples both of Paul and Swedenborg, for these great teachers, separated in time by a gulf of seventeen hundred years, were alike eager to impress upon the minds of their hearers the necessity of rising to a spiritual state of absolute superiority to the allurements and limitations of sense.

Paul says : "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." These words were not addressed to spirits divested of their material forms, but to men and women living yet in the flesh. This passage

and many others prove conclusively to the impartial Bible student that the Christianity of the first century did not hang upon the dogma of the physical resurrection of Jesus, but hinged on something infinitely higher — even the resurrection of humanity to nobler heights of spiritual attainment than it had yet reached; this must be the kind of Christianity so highly eulogized by Rev. James Freeman Clarke in his most interesting and instructive work, “Ten Great Religions,” and styled by him a *pleroma* or fullness of life containing elements of excellence foreign to all other religions known upon earth.

No intelligent student of the gospels can possibly fail to note how persistent Jesus was in urging his followers not to set their hopes and affections on transitory things, but to transfer them to the realities of spiritual being. Moses and Elijah, symbols of law and prophecy, were transfigured before the three most intimate followers of Jesus when he took them on to a high mountain and revealed to them the spiritual nature of his kingdom; their earthly ambitions were crushed even before his crucifixion, but that event robbed them of the last vestige of hope concerning material prosperity; he, their leader and teacher, rose from the dead and appeared to them in spirit, when they at once realized the truth of what he had so constantly pressed home to them during his sojourn with them as one of themselves. Their spiritual eyes were opened; a great sorrow, a bitter disappointment, a sore bereavement, had made them amenable to spiritual truths they could never understand before.

Are there no parallel instances in your own experiences? Have none of you ever been spiritually profited to an amazing extent by the frustration of every earthly hope and plan? Are there not many whom we meet every day who never turned their thoughts in spiritual directions till some crushing weight of sorrow fell upon them, snatching from them every earthly prop? It is indeed expedient for us to suffer if without suffering we remain callous and indifferent to the things pertaining to our immortal being. We must not be selfish, worldly, or

ambitious for personal and temporal distinction, and as long as we are so, we may be sure the day is not far distant when some heavy blow will force the worldliness and conceit out of us; if the blow does not fall in this life it must inevitably in another. Now what were the words addressed by Jesus to Mary Magdalene immediately he had satisfied her of his identity? "Touch me not, but go tell my brethren I have risen," is about the ordinary version. But many of the ablest commentators have very wisely translated touch, detain or hold; detain or delay me not, and do not endeavor to stay with me yourself enjoying my company, while the brethren are so anxious. Go and tell them that I am alive, seems to be the spirit of the sentence. Be not selfish in your joy, but as you have individually discovered a truth, one which has dried your tears and removed the sorrow from your heart, go and impart the joyful news to others.

A beautiful little book with a beautiful title has recently been advertised in the papers. It is called: "The Message of the Bluebird, Told to Me to Tell Others." This title is deeply expressive of a great and universal law or principle of spiritual being. Nothing is told to us which we should not pass on to others. If we get a revelation of truth we get it with the assistance of some one else; and as others have been instrumental, yea, indispensable to our receiving a truth, it is a duty we owe to humanity to hand that truth to some other needy hungry spirit. Selfishness is so utterly opposed to spirituality, so essentially antagonistic to the genius of true religion, that it never surprises us to mark how fossilized those people soon become who, having got hold of some spiritual truth, have been hugging it to their bosoms for five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, even thirty or more years, never thinking of those who are pining for the bread and water of life, of which they stood so sorely in need when first the light broke in upon our minds. Selfishness is at the root of all tyranny and monopoly; it is the primal cause of anarchy, nihilism, strikes, outrages of every description; it brings about riots and rebellions everywhere; it

antagonizes the welfare of humanity at every point, and is, in fact, the very devil of society. The grasping hand which is stretched out forcibly to demand even rights will not redeem and save society. Unselfishness, Justice, the foundation of the city which lieth four square, of which the length and height and breadth are equal ; that justice upon which an edifice of perfect love, of true philanthropy, can stand secure forever, is the only antidote to existing evils, the only panacea for all the many and grievous woes which still afflict society.

Monopoly of land and monopoly of gold may be the cause of strikes among laborers, depression of business, and panics in the money market ; monopoly of education, monopoly of truth, has been and still is the fruitful parent of a thousand ills in the reputed religious world. We do not attempt to censure individuals or single out any for condemnation ; we leave each to his own conscience ; but do you not agree with us, when you let your better selves be heard, that when you hug a blessing to yourself and share it with no one, it dwindles instead of grows ? You become no richer by your exclusiveness, but you do thereby defraud and impoverish others. It is to-day as in the time of Elijah : the poor widow who shares her barrel of meal and cruse of oil with one poorer than herself enriches him and finds her own store replenished. The more she gives the more she has to give, while those who give nothing never get anything in advance of their present acquirement. To give is to receive ; to give nothing is to foster a habit, effectually barring out the light which would otherwise shine in upon us.

The great cause of dissatisfaction with the so-called upper classes of society all over the world is the prevalent feeling on the part of those in humbler circumstances that those who are in possession of a large amount of this world's goods do not care whether those who are dependent upon them live or starve, except in so far as their welfare is indispensable to the rich man's comfort. There are natural distinctions between man and man which no socialistic or communistic theories can obliterate.

ate. Some have more talents than others, some are more industrious than others, some have superior tact, a knack of getting on in the world which others lack; and though the Declaration of Independence declares all men in this country are born free and equal, it is an undeniable fact that given equal opportunities, some will progress faster than others. Now if those who reach the summit of learning and prosperity soonest were invariably bent on disseminating their superior knowledge, and sharing their happiness and prosperity with those less favored; if a spirit of kindly forbearance and lovely charity, in addition to the strict integrity or impartial justice so sorely needed in this world, were the ruling principles of their thought and conduct, there would be no room for strikes and boycotts, no occasion for revolt, as the reputed rich man would be a friend beloved by all.

We are only truly wealthy when we can only really enjoy whatever the laws of our country allow us to call our own, by sharing all we have with others. If those splendid grounds attached to many a gentleman's estate were opened to the poor and sickly who pine for fresh air and the sights and sounds of nature; if those magnificent collections of paintings and statuary and that enchanting music so common to the *salons* of the affluent could be divided with those who have an eye to the beautiful but cannot afford to revel in its influence, the first step would be taken to break down the growing feeling of hostility now threatening a revolution against the representatives of capital *versus* labor. We do not for a moment say that palliative measures will ever finally settle a question; but we do maintain that the hatred felt by one section of society for another arises out of the ineradicable conviction on the part of the poorer that the wealthy are a grasping, greedy set, totally indifferent to everybody's welfare but their own. No arbitration is practically possible so long as such a state of feeling continues, and it will remain until some practical results are forthcoming to prove that if not always absent, it is now at least being fast outgrown.

If so much depends upon the use to which we put material things, if monopoly of land, money and all the comforts and conveniences of external life occasion so much misery and anarchy, and is so detestable a crime, what shall we say of that spiritual selfishness, that monopoly of truth, which allows a few to boast of themselves as sole possessors of the highest revelation ever given to earth, a revelation which they carefully lock away from others and seem only to appreciate because it is their exclusive property? The resurrection we must experience, if we would find the golden key which unlocks the door of the true kingdom of heaven, is a resurrection from selfishness even to the glorious heights of altruism, which says, Do all for others. The true altruistic feeling does not overlook the importance of self-culture; on the contrary, it impresses on every one the necessity of culturing self for the good of humanity. Can we teach what we do not know? Can we impart what we do not possess? Self-culture is indeed a duty, but when the truth we receive becomes to us a million times more precious because we can impart it to others, we grow in grace and in the knowledge of truth daily; and instead of drinking from a little tank all our own, from which we allow no one to take a draught of living water, we become pipes connected with an eternal reservoir, we become windows, always open, through which sunlight and air are constantly pouring in; we grow to see our souls in the light of ever-burning lamps, fed by the universal atmosphere, from which any quantity of lights may be kindled, while our flame never grows less.

If any one shall enquire, But what do you think of the literal resurrection? What became of the body not found in the tomb? What means the appearance of Jesus to Thomas in a solid, bodily form? we answer in two ways, and in so doing we speak of universal spiritual laws, and do not confine ourselves to any particular place, time or person. The triumphant spirit who can exclaim with reference to his earthly work, "It is finished," has gained sovereign sway over all material things. To

him the limitations of time and sense are forever annihilated. He can improvise a body and disintegrate one as easily as you can put on and take off your clothing; he can render himself visible and again invisible to material sense. This wonderful power of spirit over matter is taught philosophically by many spiritual teachers in their dissertations on what is termed spirit-materialization. Of course spirit never becomes material, but it can so use material as its servant as to produce any desired phenomenon. Physical manifestations are as necessary for doubting Didymus to-day as they ever were eighteen hundred years ago. But the higher view of the subject is the spiritualization of mankind. When you are not dependent upon cabinets and séance-rooms and physical media for your evidences of immortality, you have graduated higher; you have learned what these phenomena can teach; and while they are needful for those in primary schools of spiritual education, they being but accommodations of spiritual truth to mortal sense, must of necessity be superseded by other proofs and demonstrations more entirely spiritual. More blessed are they who have not seen with the outward but with the inward eye, than those who depend on sensuous evidences which may be at any time withdrawn.

Let us accept with thankfulness whatever portion of truth falls to our share, and do our best to enlighten others by sharing our knowledge with those in need. Let us never descend to quibble as to the language the spirit of truth shall employ when addressing us or any one else, remembering that at Pentecost of old the convincing nature of the phenomena consisted in the fact of every man hearing in his own language the wonderful truths the spirit had to impart. God uses all means and all messengers; we must employ those most fitted to our needs individually, but never forget that our wants and those of others may be widely different. Thus the unity of the spirit is made manifest in a diversity of gifts.

MANY MANSIONS IN THE FATHER'S HOUSE.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS,

Delivered on a Funeral Occasion, prior to the Interment.

INVOCATION.

O, INFINITE SPIRIT, fount of all goodness, in whom we live and move and have our being! Thou art the eternal and immortal life, and all souls forever live in Thy sight. Unto Thee there can be no death; in Thy sight there can be no dead; but while there may be translation or transition, a passing of the spirit from one form into another, the soul which is in Thine image, fashioned after Thy likeness, is forever endowed with a spark of Thine own immortality. When we stand face to face with what men call death; when we are brought into the immediate presence of that great mystery, before which the wisest and the noblest of mankind have bowed, and when we remember that, beyond all the fading scenes of earthly life, there are imperishable habitations reserved for man's immortal spirit, where all the ties of friendship will bind loving hearts into a closer union than they could know on earth; where all holy aspirations, noble desires and virtuous inclinations, high-born aspirations and lovely talents may bloom into their glorious fruition, we can anon praise Thee in the presence of what men have called the last dread enemy; we can anon recognize that so-called enemy as a friend in disguise, as an angel who is draped in sable garments, and who does not as yet show us the full beauty of his lovely form. We praise Thee, Thou infinite Parent of all, that Thy children are all one great family and Thou its foundation. Some of them are on one side and some on the other side of the mystic river. The immortal can clasp hands with the mortal, the mortal with the immortal, across the shallow waters. Though sometimes the mist hangs over the river and we cannot see our way across, we can trust Thy hand, oh, infinite Love and Wisdom, to guide us in the dark as well as in the light.

All nature teaches us that Thou art working great and eternal good; all nature tells us of the evolution of higher from lower forms of being. All nature tells us that the summer will follow the spring, as the spring has followed the winter; and that after the

summer's glory the yet richer and riper autumn will crown its work. All nature tells us, first the bough, then the blossom, and after the flower the fruit, and after the fruit the seed deposited in the ground to bring forth richer harvest in years to come. All nature speaks to us of a use for everything. No supply without a demand, and no demand without a supply to meet it. And when we contemplate a world vested on every hand with impenetrable mysteries, where the complexity of material circumstances hedges us in, and where we cannot always trace thy way, our hearts would forever place firm reliance upon the blessed assurances that come to us in our better moments, that Thou art love, and that all things are working together for the best. We can praise Thee for the snows of winter as well as for the sunshine of summer; we can praise Thee for the time of the sere and yellow leaves when they fall faded from the tree, as well as for the hour when the young buds burst forth with the promise of luxuriant foliage and fruitage.

We can praise Thee for the hour of death as well as for the hour of birth. And, standing to-day in the presence of the mortal remains of a dearly beloved brother who has been called upon to pass from the material to the immaterial state, we praise Thee because angel's hands have beckoned him, because he has passed on to join the ranks of the great majority, because he is now united with friends who loved him and ministered to him while yet he was in the material world, because he can now send the love of an angel down upon those who are still in the material state, and because he has now the opportunity in their solitary hours and moments of giving them inspiring thoughts, without, perhaps, their knowing whence they come, but which in every instance yield comfort and instruction to their hearts.

All nature tells us—and nature is Thy Book, the volume of Thy fair creation—that the realities of our being are invisible, that that which makes us what we are, is veiled from our outward observation. We cannot see the forces of the material world, and yet we can trace their operations upon ourselves, and know of them as causes by the effects they produce. And so in the midst of the great spiritual universe in which we ever dwell, we only know that there are multitudes of heavenly inspirations that come to inspire our being though veiled from outward sense. We thank Thee for the ties that are unbreakable, the affection that is immortal, and for all that holds beloved ones together, in a union that death can never destroy.

We pray that consolation may come from spheres celestial to all who are mourning the loss of dear friends, whether they be gathered in this room or elsewhere. May all mourners be unselfish in their sorrow and rejoice in their friends' promotion, and not grieve over their own earthly loss. May they know that it is even expedient for them, when their loved ones are taken from the mortal side, that their thoughts may turn more directly to the

things of the spirit, and their affections be gradually weaned from the material state. May those who are sorrowing to-day remember that the loved ones gone before have opened a door into spirit life through which they too, soon must enter, and that loved ones are busily engaged preparing for their reception, when the time shall come that they shall accomplish an exit from the material state, and effect an entrance into the spiritual world. May they know that if the present hour is one of separation and bereavement, because a loved one has gone away, that, when the hour of their transition comes, an hour that would be otherwise darkened by the dread of coming separation will be brightened by the knowledge that they are going home to meet a dear brother, who has gone before them into their Father's house.

We pray that spiritual ministration may be granted unto all, that all may feel the touch of angels' wings of consolation whenever they are in sadness; that, when they stumble in darkness and perplexity, they may see a light before them, and hear a loving word that shall guide them into the right path. We ask that such revelation of immortal life may be vouchsafed to each, that the individual needs of every one may be supplied. In order that we may gain these rich blessings, we pray that we may be inspired with holy fervor to break down every barrier that interposes itself between ourselves and a consecration to all the highest and noblest ideals of life. As the open casement admits light and air, so may our minds be open to truth, ever looking heavenward, ever gazing sunward to admit the light and beauty of the spiritual universe. May our ears ever be open to the songs of angels. May we remove every scale of pride, prejudice and selfishness from our eyes. Having eyes, may we see, having ears, hear, and be neither blind nor deaf to the sublimity of life immortal. May we know that everywhere, on land and on sea, in the material body or out of it, we are in a boundless universe presided over and permeated by an infinite intelligence, who is the parent, and friend, and benefactor of us all.

We tenderly confide dust to dust, and ashes to ashes; we commit the mortal remains of our dear brother to mother earth, but we can commit the spirit, without doubt or fear, to Thee the great parent spirit, knowing that, in the hands of Thine angel-messengers, he will be safely carried and received into that state of being which he is most prepared to occupy and enjoy.

May resignation rest upon all, as a sure and holy blessing from above. May the light of hope kindle the sacred torch which shall light the dark journey of probation. May holy faith in all that is good, and pure, and true, be a beacon light to guide all to immortality. May love divine, pure and fervent friendship, and celestial charity, the brightest and sweetest of all virtues, find an abiding resting place within all our hearts. May we all know that Thou art perfect love and perfect wisdom, and that when we fail to under-

stand the goodness and utility of the working of Thy providence, the fault lies in our own infirmity and not in Thy decrees. We ask for no change in Thy laws, no alteration in Thy dealings toward us, but we ask for clearer light to discern spiritual things spiritually, for development towards more fervent charity, till we can take all humanity into the arms of our affections; for brighter hope and more abiding faith. May these graces be as the light of brilliant stars illumining our darkest night, and transforming all shadows and sorrows and earthly privations into clearer revelations of spiritual truths, which we trust will be more and more perfectly made known to us, as through the eternal ages we climb the glorious steepes of the mountains of eternity, our motto ever *Excelsior!* progressing ever with the prayer in our hearts and the song on our lips, Nearer, O God, to Thee, forever nearer unto Thee. Amen.

WE have been called here to-day to say a few words in the presence of all that is mortal, of a brother who has been very dear to the many relatives, friends, and all who have congregated in this room. We have no doubt, all of you have come here from feelings of friendship and sincere respect for the one who has departed hence already in spirit, and whose material form we are in a short time to place in the bosom of Mother Earth.

Death is no uncommon spectacle. We are living in a world where life and death are perpetually struggling with each other. We see the fairest flowers scarcely burst into bloom, before they drop from the plant and die; we see the leaves fall from the trees in the autumn, almost before those trees are fairly covered with them, so rapidly do the months roll by, so quickly does nature accomplish her transformations. We are all familiar with death in an immense variety of forms, and all the light that nature can throw upon the wonderful and mysterious questions of what death is and why things die, tends to confirm and strengthen, instead of to weaken our faith in the immortality of the human soul.

There are many persons who imagine that, with the light of science which is now shining so brightly upon the world, men's faith in immortality is waxing faint, and that the evidences are growing less and less in favor of the long-cherished doctrine of the immortality of the

soul ; but in the light of the doctrine of evolution which is now being proclaimed in the churches, as well as advocated in scientific and literary periodicals, all goes to show that everything exists for a purpose, and that everything is passing on in order to make way for something better than itself.

We look upon life as a long ladder, of which the rounds are so numerous that we cannot count them. It is like the ladder which the Patriarch Jacob saw in his vision in a night-hour long ago. The ladder may have its base upon earth, but its summit is far beyond the clouds. Human vision may behold the lowest rounds, but no mortal mind can comprehend the height to which it towers above the clouds. As the patriarch of old saw the angels coming down and going up upon this mysterious ladder, constantly ascending and descending, so may we, as we look upon the great ladder of life, see angels continually coming down to us laden with joyous blessings, and continually going up carrying with them our aspirations and desires, toward a fulfillment of existence in a broader, deeper, higher and happier life than that of earth. All that is revealed to us by the works of nature tends to confirm that hope which is so deeply implanted in our nature, to prove it a reality. For every demand in life a supply exists somewhere ; everything exists for some purpose ; our powers and talents are not given us for naught, but sometime and somewhere we shall assuredly find opportunity for the ample employment of them all.

How short is earthly life ! How often are we prevented from doing the good that we would fain accomplish ; from rendering that service to mankind which it is our heart's desire to render, by untoward earthly circumstances over which we have no control. Struggle against them as we will, they will overcome us and we have no power to stem the resistless tide that bears us on against our will to some unknown goal we cannot even faintly discover. How frequently in the midst of active enterprise, in the full promise of final success, some one is removed

from the material state of being! He has not used up his energies; his mind was brighter the day he died than ever before, and yet he is called by some mysterious dispensation of providence to pass from the material into the immaterial state. When we stand before such a body as that of our friend here we feel and know intuitively, that the spirit which we loved so well, which we prized so dearly, has only laid off an outward covering, and as our eyes cannot behold substances so attenuated as the substance of the spiritual body, it must be that our friend has only become invisible; he is as substantial, as actual and objective in every intelligent meaning that we can attach to such words, as he has ever been, only our eyes cannot see the spiritual body, our ears cannot hear the spiritual voice.

We are convinced of the existence of a great variety of laws and forces, but we have never seen them; we can only know them by their effects. We have never seen electricity, nor the wind, nor the emotions of the heart, all of which inspire us to action; we have never seen our thoughts, nor the thinking principle within us, and so with all our knowledge of anthropology we are unable to explain by means of anatomy, physiology and other material sciences, the processes whereby the human spirit retains its identity, its persistent individuality, despite all the changes that are continually taking place in the organs of our bodies, changes which in a few years completely remodel them, yet through *all* our individuality lives on. All the substances which compose the body pass away into vapor and others take their places; our bodies are mere aggregations of molecules which are never long composed of the same molecules, but though as physiologists compute in seven years they *completely* change, our individuality remains the same; we retain the same loves, desires, traits of character; we have each an individuality, marked and clear, and which nothing can rob us of, while the changes to which our mortal forms are subject go on without producing any change in

our real being, therefore, while we are living in the material form, we have every reason for assuming that there is a principle within us that is deathless, that can survive the sudden removal of the entire physical body, as it has long survived the gradual change in its conditions.

If our bodies are changed hour by hour, day by day, year by year, and in a few years they are entirely remodeled, while our individuality outlives those gradual changes, does it seem less probable that when the time comes for the material envelope to be entirely removed, we shall continue to exist? Our real nature is a tablet upon which immortal characters are written; the seal may be broken, the envelope may be torn to pieces, without injuring the letter, which is at length revealed in all its wonderful completion to the denizens of the spiritual world; some even in the material world may be able to read the writing which is inscribed upon the imperishable tablet of man's spiritual nature.

We rejoice to know that our beloved brother is one who during his earthly life intuitively apprehended immortality; we know that he had many experiences which convinced him beyond the shadow of a doubt that holy, loving beings were around him which the flesh could not hear or see. He was familiar with the delightful presence of friends gone before. He felt that wise and intelligent minds with superior skill to his own were guiding and directing him in the affairs of life. During his last hours he stretched out his hands as though he was anxious to go, and felt as if he could not be going into a strange country, but to friends that were true and tried. There were no circumstances connected with his passing away that were specially startling, but many that were encouraging; his virtues, especially his noble straightforwardness, and his earnest appreciation of all that elevates mankind and inspires to a higher life by the recognition of a high ideal, has made his memory very sweet, and prepared for him in your hearts a very loving place among those you delight to honor. You cannot forget

him—you would not if you could. He seems to have been called away at a time when he might have done more on earth, when you hoped he might remain for many years longer; but he was ready to go, death had no fear or sting; it was no leap in the dark, but a step in the light; he felt he was going from a smaller into a larger, from a darker into a lighter room, into one of the many apartments which the Father has provided in his great house in spirit.

This instinctive discovering of immortality is a natural recognition of the immortal life by the immortal soul. Many persons are not satisfied by intuition, they even say they do not recognize it. There are many people who cannot see colors, but that does not prove that those who see them are deluded. It is the same with many who cannot hear sounds. Some of us have greater powers, keener faculties and finer sensibilities than others; some are natural specialists; they excel in certain directions, and they take in a kind and degree of information which others cannot. In all ages there have existed mediumistic persons—seers, prophets and oracles, those who have seen through the mist which veils the unseen world, and who have revealed it to the rest of mankind, and if their testimony has been accepted by a very large percentage of the human family, if they have made wonderful discoveries through their visions, inspirations and intuition, may not the revelation be simply a discovery by certain finely organized and well-developed persons, so far as the spiritual nature is concerned, of what is denied to those who have not these clear faculties for observation?

Our departed brother was one of the seers, one of the prophets, one of those intuitive minds who had internal evidences of immortal life; he felt convinced that he was living in two worlds at once, a life in the inner world being to him a reality all the while he continued his life in the outer; so when the time came for the material body to be cast aside, and the spiritual body to free itself

from material thralldom, he went out like a bird from a cage, like a captive from his prison bonds, glad to be relieved from care and pain, and though devotedly attached to the dear friends who ministered so long and earnestly and lovingly to his wants, though bound very closely to all his beloved ones; of a very affectionate nature, unable without pain to break any earthly ties, his consolation lay in the assurance that instead of breaking, death would strengthen every tie, as all affection which bound him to his loved ones on earth would but appear yet stronger when the material body was removed.

We feel that this beloved brother is here at this moment saying: "We know it is hard to part from friends on earth, but you know there will come a time when you will all have to cast off this mortal body; supposing you had no bereavements during your earthly life, supposing all your friends were to remain with you on the mortal globe until you went to the invisible world; at the time when you came to pass away, would you not shrink from the thought of separation, would not the hour of your passing to another life be a time of breaking of ties, and would it not sadden you because you had to leave so many dear ones? But if you are enduring all your bereavements now, if, in the present state of existence, you are made to feel the pangs of separation, when the time comes for passing into the other life, the joys of reunion instead of the pangs of separation will be your portion. What we lose at one time we gain at another. If we have our separations and troubles while in the material form, we do not have to bear them when we come to pass out of it. Those who have their trouble, bereavement or care now, have something brighter to look forward to in the coming days. It is only a question whether the affliction comes at one time or another; it is only a question of *when* we shall have to bear our burdens, for burdens sooner or later fall upon the shoulders of all. Every one has to carry some cross, it is ever through the cross the crown is gained. All the tears we shed of sympathy and

sorrow form the pearls in those mystic gates which sometime will unclothe and admit us to realms celestial.

Is there anything unnatural or saddening about death? We ought to be thoroughly familiarized with it; *everything* dies, but only in order that something brighter may come from it. We are accustomed to it, and yet we always dread the separation it brings in the same way, and to perhaps a greater extent than our parting from a friend who takes a long voyage across the water or land. It is very hard for a mother to part from her child, a wife from her husband; but supposing the mother knows that her son's going is his promotion, that he goes to begin a career of greater usefulness, and that his future prospects are very much bettered by a temporary absence? Is there not a wondrous beauty in the unselfish love that says to the departing child, "I am glad you are going because you are going to a more favorable place and a wider sphere of usefulness; I am glad to suffer in order that you may earn more cause for rejoicing." Is there not a pathos and dignity, a nobility and grandeur about the willingness to bear such suffering for others? Is there anything so splendid in life as heroism? When, on Decoration Day, some of you take part in the decoration of the soldiers' graves and hear the eulogies pronounced for the heroes who gave their life-blood for the country and its liberty, do you not feel the deepest part of your nature touched and your heart thrilled with responsive gratitude, when you think of the nobility of those who were willing to lose all they possessed on earth that others might be gainers? There is nothing so divine in life as the element of unselfishness. All the world's justly celebrated heroes and heroines were marked by their unselfishness.

It is destined that we shall suffer that others may be better off. The crown of life is a glorious diadem, in which all jewels that are fitted to survive immortally shine in resplendent beauty. Our departed friend is one who loved others better than himself; he always yearned to do some good; it was his ambition to be useful in

society; it was his dearest wish to help the rest of mankind. One who was in sorrow would come to him for sympathy and never come in vain; one who was in perplexity would come to him for advice and be sure of getting the very best our brother was able to give him: As you look upon these mortal features, lying so calmly in the embrace of death, you can see benevolence, humanity, sympathy expressed, all the coronal region of the brain well developed, marking a character that *could* have but a high ideal.

How can any one live a noble life who has not a high ideal? We must encourage the elements of hope and aspiration in our being. Are not all great characters like Longfellow's "Alpine boy," who ascends the mountain steep, carrying a banner bearing the word "Excelsior"? Supposing a valiant youth should fall and be found by Saint Bernard dogs in the snow, and be buried by the monks in the mountains, does not Longfellow sum up all true spiritual teaching in the last verse of his sublime poem,

"There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!"

The spirit, the emancipated, still sings Excelsior; the greatest truth and consolation the idea of spirit communion really conveys to you is, that death does not sunder any tie of affection, and that, as you can derive good from one another through the sweet communion of friends while in the material form, so from their higher ranges of experience and broader compass of information, spirits can bring you courage and inspiration in darkness and distress, that will lift you nearer to the immortal life.

We do not pretend to say that everybody can accept phenomenal spiritualism, or be the subjects of signs, wonders or visions, convincing them externally of the presence of the departed; but we do say, that friends in

spirit exert an influence upon all, though not always palpably. If there were an exhilarating gas in the atmosphere of this room and you did not know of it, you would, nevertheless, be under its influence; you would feel exhilarated, but without knowing what exhilarated you. Somebody might come and tell you and then you would know, but previously you would have felt the effect without knowing the cause. How often are we led by what we know not of? How unseen and inscrutable, very often, are those thoughts which come into our minds quite unexpectedly; certainly not in the ordinary course of thinking, we experience a sudden revelation entering through an entirely interior channel? How very often, when we are dreaming or meditating upon life, some image comes suddenly before us; we cannot call to mind anything he said or did, but we are reminded of a departed friend by some thought straying into our mind most unaccountably; in such ways as these we are always near the spirit world, and our friends are near to us. When we close our earthly lives, we shall realize the blessing we have long enjoyed, we shall know then that the life which comes after death is no more and no less a natural and active life than the life we lived in the earthly body.

We shall know that life immortal simply changes its outward aspects; that the same God who gave us life, continues it in realms beyond the grave, that the same love that makes home delightful here, makes our home joyful over there; there is but one God for this world and all others, life is one unbroken chain in which only a very few links are visible below; while the vast number of links that constitute it, stretch away into infinitude and eternity, where no mortal eye or finite mind can fully peer. We wish to leave with you to-day one truly consolatory thought, and that is, the naturalness and homelikeness of the spirit life; this doctrine has been taught in all ages of the world and by all philosophers. Jesus reminded his disciples expressly of it when they questioned him. In chapter xiv. of the Fourth Gospel,

which is so often quoted to console mourners, Jesus says to his disciples: "In my father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." He clearly implies in these words that they were quite familiar with that idea, they had received such ideas as Jews, if they were Jews, for Jews believe in the immortality of the soul. If they were not Jews but Gentiles, then the Gentiles including all Samaritans believed in immortality. It was taught in Egypt and the record of it is found in the Egyptian "book of the dead;" it is engraven on the obelisks and on many other wonders of the land of the Nile. In India it was taught in the sacred Vedas, and the followers of their teachings on both banks of the Ganges had declared their faith in immortality, long before either Judaism or Christianity held sway in Asia. Immortality has been taught in Persia, Greece and Rome; all great philosophers, notably Plato, Pythagoras and Socrates, have proclaimed it; in the farthest northern parts of Europe, traditions abound among the Scandinavians and Norsemen concerning communion with beings in spirit life, while the North American Indian, the Red Man of the prairies, believes that after death he will meet his friends, and that during the time that must elapse between their passing into spirit life and his, there will be some subtle communication between them, and that they can help each other.

Immortality has perhaps been brought into the strongest light and presented to mankind more forcibly in the gospels than in any other writings, but it is the universal hope of mankind, and with the continuous progress of the centuries its reality becomes less and less obscure. We are constantly learning more and more concerning nature; we can now navigate many seas, once unnavigable; we can explain many mysteries of being, once inexplicable; as the astronomer with his telescope is always discovering new facts concerning the heavens, and as the chemist is always discovering new elements or gaining new information as to their combina-

tions, so are we ever learning more about the immortal state ; but the highest thought that comes to us to-day is the same as the oldest conception of the ages, viz., that life beyond the grave is life at home ; we are only pilgrims here and our goal is in a spiritual realm. Whenever that sweet song, " Home, Sweet Home," (one of the most charming of songs,) reaches our ears, whether sung melodiously by the most accomplished cantatrice, or without much outward harmony by children in a cottage porch, we feel that home expresses almost everything that human hearts can long for ; but home is not the house of grandeur, pretentious style, and luxurious ease. It is not the result of portly pillars or colored windows, splendid tapestry or the most highly finished workmanship ; it is not a palace gorgeously furnished, where the eyes rest on everything beautiful and the ears drink in every melodious sound. A millionaire or king may be the resident of a gorgeous palace and yet be miserable, while the day laborer, earning perhaps only a scanty pittance, barely enough to keep a roof over his head, may enjoy perfect happiness ; what gives us a home is the presence of those whom we love ; affection is indispensable to home ; affection can build a home of a few timbers, but without affection an edifice of gold, silver and precious stones is no home at all ; home is where our heart is, where our affections are ; and has not Jesus most beautifully and graphically characterized our life in the spiritual world as dwelling in " father's " house, whither he went to prepare a place for those who loved him ? There is a world of meaning in the promise, " I go to prepare a place for you." He who went is the one who loved them and the one whom they loved, they were objects of his affection, he is the object of theirs, and therefore his utterance is a blessed declaration and recognition of an eternal truth. It is true with regard to every man and clime, and under all circumstances, that the ones whom you love the best who have departed to

the other life will be the first to greet you there when you pass from the material body.

Wherever the ties of true affection bind, they will bind forever; blood, birth, breeding and all external associations will fade away, but Love can never die, sympathy is imperishable. Any one who can stand by the bedside of a sufferer and love him the more the weaker he becomes, one who can love the poor and disabled, the soldier mutilated in war, one who can look away from all disfigurement of body, and, when all the earthly powers have faded, still love on, such an one, whose love outlives all losses of property and beauty, possesses and manifests an affection which is eternal, and we can no more doubt that this love will abide eternally than we can doubt our own existence. To us it is an absolutely settled question, it comes to us with the irresistible force of an abiding reality that nothing can ever shake.

It is to us no guess-work, but a demonstrated reality, this wonderful fact of our perpetual union with those we really love; and so, when these obsequies are over, when the body of our beloved brother is committed to the earth and you come back to your home, do not allow yourselves to think that your loved one has gone from you, that you will see him no more, never again hear his footfall on the stairs. Strive rather to realize, as Longfellow has found, that—

“When the hours of Day are numbered,
And the voices of the Night
Wake the better soul, that slumbered
To a holy, calm delight,
Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true hearted,
Come to visit us once more.”

Longfellow embodies the very essence of true spiritualism in his poetry. All the great poets of the ages have realized its truth; all the greatest teachers of the

ages have realized vividly the same fact, the immortality of the soul ; we must however never forget that all happiness in the life beyond which we can enjoy fully comes to us because we have improved our talents and developed powers of appreciation. We could not enjoy a symphony without a love of music, we must have developed a love of music or else the sounds are not melodious to us. We might be in a conservatory filled with the choicest flowers, but unless we have our eyes open and our sense of smell is keen, the beautiful flowers and their perfume will pass by without our noticing them ; so it is in spiritual life.

Every time we develop our spiritual nature by thinking a kind thought or doing a kind action, we shall find that we have planted a flower in our spiritual garden ; every time we have been unselfish, we shall find that the very fact of having been so has increased our capacity for enjoyment.

If our condition is open to improvement, is it not a blessed thought that hope is immortal and that forever something may be looked forward to and hoped for ? Knowledge being infinite we can progress in strength, in wisdom, ever nearer and nearer to the eternal goal. The time may come when we shall be perfectly happy ; we shall be when all our thoughts are pure ; the time undoubtedly will come when we shall suffer no more, when everything that is not truly spiritual, divine and ideal about us, shall have been removed ; we shall then enjoy perfect rest and happiness, but we may go on developing new capacities, which we dream not of, attaining to sublimer heights of wisdom, still delving in the mines of existence and digging up new jewels that we knew not had an existence. Our own beloved tasks, in a spiritual way we may continue to perform, and thereby fill the niche especially designed for us in the great temple of universal being. We shall find that all we could not do because of the shortness of our earthly life, we can accomplish in eternity.

and here we must leave you with this one most beautiful thought—that our beloved ones are working forever while they rest, and resting while they work. You may find the word that tells you your brother rests; you have been well to trace it in beautiful flowers; but when we come to rest we do not need the rest of idleness or inactivity. It is rest from toil, care and perplexity, sin, sorrow and everything that harasses us, we desire. What can be more delightful than to enjoy work, to always have a peaceful mind and to be content in spirit, to always be at rest within ourselves, to always be on harmonious terms with all around us, to enjoy our work, to be incessantly occupied and yet never wearied? We can have action and rest perfectly combined, must surely constitute the joy of the immortal spirit. He is both working and resting now, working without experiencing fatigue, and, while resting, enjoying the pleasure of perpetual occupation.

Let us feel that our brother who is at rest is so in a deeper sense than that of inactivity, and that while constantly at work (the work he loved has not slipped from his fingers), he is at peace. May we all have the blessing of rest, while we work, may we enjoy our work because our work is useful; may we go on taking more and more delight in every honorable occupation, until deeper rest and the greater work of eternity shall surpass even our most sanguine and eager anticipations of rest that cannot be measured by human measures, not even by those of the most aspiring and most uplifted spirits.

He rests, you see; the silent grave
 This mortal form will quickly take,
 But he has gone to brighter worlds,
 Where he his thirsty soul may slake
 With water from the immortal spring,
 From life's pure river flowing free,
 Which flows through meadows, pastures green,
 While on the banks immortal flowers
 Forever bloom in loveliest sheen.

You've brought sweet tributes of your love,
 And placed them gently here to day,
 These opening flowers of summer-time,
 How beautiful is their array;
 All hues and colors sweetly blend,
 The white, the gold, the deepest red,
 They all contrast and yet all blend,
 While all a welcome perfume shed.

Ah! see the circle on his breast!
 What means the circle lying there?
 'Tis emblem of immortal life,
 A life which every soul must share.
 How beautiful the perfect round,
 Entire, a unit, all complete,
 A circle of most beauteous flowers,
 In which soft pansies sweetly meet,
 The roses and the pinks, with green
 Leaves peeping forth between them all;
 They all-together scent the air
 With fragrance sweet, like breath of prayer.

Behold the pure white lilies fair,
 They're lying there just at his feet;
 What can they tell? His life in thought
 Was very pure and very sweet,
 And now in purer realms doth dwell
 His spirit, rescued from the clay.
 His work is done in mortal form,
 And now, with flowers of bright array,
 His happy soul comes forth and tells
 How his brave spirit's best desire
 And hopes which earth could never crown
 Are now fulfilled his soul to inspire.

He's now more real than when he dwelt
 Clad in a vesture of earth's clay.
 He now is nearer to his goal,
 And nearer ever speeds his way.
 Here at his head so calm and still,
 So noble in its rounded height,
 You place upon a pure white ground,
 In purple letters glowing bright,
 "Brother's at rest," your brother, still
 A faithful comrade in repose,
 Released from all his mortal woes.

Around are many flowers, behind
 Are banks of flowers, a bright array ;
 The golden roses, symbol light,
 Which breaks upon his heavenly way.
 These gently drape the earthly form,
 That soon will rest beneath the sod,
 While his true spirit lives and sings.
 Forever nearer to its God.

His portrait in an arch of flowers,
 Doth point you to the immortal form
 O'er which death can exert no power.
 The eyes unclosed, brow manly, firm ;
 What tales of eloquence to-day
 In those kind, bright, expressive eyes,
 Whose kind and gentle radiance say,
 His love on earth was pure and wise,
 The heavenly sunshine of true love
 Broods o'er you like a gentle dove.
 And then the perfect arch of flowers,
 A coronation arch is given ;
 He has gone home where angel friends
 And loved ones, who have left this prison,
 Have raised an arch of triumph high,
 Escorting him into a world
 Divinely blessed, where none can die.

Oh, faith confirmed, more fair and true,
 In spirit can we greet you now,
 Transformed into a brighter state,
 And wearing now a brighter crown.
 All kind words you have said, all
 Sweet thoughts which your mind has known,
 All loving deeds which you have done,
 In gems of purest light are shown.
 Expressive emblems, lovely flowers,
 O, how they point to higher birth,
 Where all sad pains, and trials hard,
 Endured so bravely while on earth,
 In immortality produce
 A triumph-archway into light.
 More ideality, more hope,
 More light, more knowledge, till the soul
 Lose all but those immortal things
 Which make it ever truly great.

And still more tender doth it grow,
 Still loving all the loved ones here,
 An influence divine doth flow,
 Till sweeter, fairer flowers appear.
 Heaven's ble-sings in these tributes fair,
 Which now adorn his resting place,
 Shed perfume like sweet memory,
 Which lingers aye in sweetest grace
 By hope, by love, by earnest prayer,
 Though he has gone beyond earth's state,
 Your hearts enshrine his memory,
 And he will open wide its gate.
 Oh, sister, brother, he and you
 Together are in love's embrace.
 Look at his smiling face, and trust
 That you will meet him face to face.
 May your lives always be so pure,
 So beautiful, that when you die
 To all that's earthly, you at once
 May rise to beauteous realms on high,
 And now to heaven, fair, trusting, pure,
 Let rise the fragrance of your love,
 Like the sweet odors of these flowers,
 Till you and he are one above.

Now may the blessing of the Eternal, the infinite
 parent of all wisdom and love, rest upon you forever.
 May sweet and holy thoughts and hopes of immortality
 lift your affections from the perishable things of earth to
 the imperishable realities of eternity, and may you so
 tread the paths of wisdom, so long as you linger here,
 that, whenever you are called to join your brother, death
 may be to you an angel's call; and the sound which shall
 greet you beyond, may it be the voice of welcome of those
 in whose company you may work, and rest, and enjoy
 eternity, forever progressing nearer to the all-perfect love
 and wisdom. Amen.

In Memoriam.—Charles H. Foster.

IT seems to us scarcely right to allow the occasion of the transition of Charles H. Foster, the celebrated medium, to the spirit-life, to pass unnoticed in the order of our regular ministrations. It was our privilege to speak at the funeral of his earthly remains only a few days ago, and as he was for many years a prominent public character, one who has passed through innumerable vicissitudes, been in many quarters highly appreciated and in others grossly misrepresented; as his was a complex character, an extraordinary life, and as there are many important lessons to be learned from an impartial view of his career and disposition, we shall endeavor in this discourse to lay before you a few thoughts and suggestions which have pressed in upon us with increasing power and clearness since the moment when we were summoned to offer the last tokens of friendly recognition and sympathy in presence of his earthly remains and in hearing of the large and representative concourse of friends and neighbors who gathered at his home in Salem on the occasion of the funeral service.

“The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones,” may be true to some extent in a perverted state of society, but the reverse is rather true in a majority of instances, when even an ordinary measure of right feeling and sympathy prevail. The milk of human kindness often flows more freely at a deathbed and at a funeral than at any other time, and it is right that it should be so, as death carries saint and sinner alike beyond the pale of mortal jurisdiction, and arraigns every spirit before a bar at which no earthly judge presides. Here and there a man of coarsest metal may be found who seemingly takes delight in harrowing

up the feelings of the mourner by indulging in execrations of the departed; but such monsters, who are a disgrace to the human name, are few and far between; and while an austere and rigid Calvinism may have afforded them some pretext for their ill-timed vent of spleen, the milder theology, which is now happily illuminating the world and softening the asperities of human nature, takes no delight in pronouncing a fearful doom for the departed.

There is also a deep-seated conviction in human nature everywhere that sin is of the flesh, and that when the body is cast aside the emancipated spirit is purer than when it dwelt within a tabernacle of flesh. Old-school Universalism has carried this thought to a dangerous extreme, but the thought itself, on which Universalism is based, is a true one. The excess of this feeling has sometimes led to the pronouncement of baseless eulogies and assisted in the spread of erroneous ideas concerning the future life; but when all false margins are removed, the idea itself stands out in glowing splendor, as in perfect accord with every one of man's deepest and noblest intuitions concerning the spirit and its hereafter.

Some few years ago a controversy was raging in New England over probation in or after death. Joseph Cook and others who claim to represent Orthodox congregationalism fought for probation in death but not after. Dr. Miner and many others, representing the Universalistic party, contended for probation after death. Probation in and after death are doubtless truths, as every trial the spirit has to encounter is a means of purification and growth; and death, which is a sudden plunge into another state of being, usually accompanied by feelings of a very active and decided character, may justly be regarded as one of the greatest crises in the career of the human spirit. Time is nothing to the spirit; an instant may do more for the immortal soul at one time than many years have done at another. We cannot

judge by length of days how long a man has lived. Spiritual maturity can never be determined by the length of time the spirit has dwelt in an earthly body. As some flowers take long to mature, blossoming in the shade, while others are quickly forced into maturity by the intense glow of midsummer heat, or by exposure to the tropical glare of the sun in its meridian glory, or the forcing process of the conservatory, so some lives are brought out nearer to fruition in a single hour of earthly experience, if that experience be an intensely trying one, than others are in many years of calm and shaded seclusion from the active strife and sore temptations to which their brethren are exposed. Adelaide Proctor, in her story of a faithful soul, a charming adaptation from an old Persian lyric, tells the truth very graphically upon this subject when she pictures a spirit needing one thousand years more of expiatory discipline in purgatory, suffering for one moment such indescribable anguish that one thousand years of time, as counted by the angel who held the doors of Paradise, were all summed up in that single instant.

It is a common vice among all sects and societies to set up entirely false standards of judgment everywhere, and try to make every life conform to some rigid rule by which none save those who are adapted to the rule can be justly judged. The human body, indeed human nature in its entirety, has often been compared to a musical instrument—a harp of a thousand strings. Some lives seem to answer to this simile; some remind us more of the *Æolian* harp than of any other instrument—that simple but most exquisitely sensitive piece of mechanism which involuntarily responds to every breath of wind that approaches it, to the zephyr as well as the hurricane. But if some are like the *Æolian* harp, others remind us of a church organ, which can only be induced to send forth music when vigorously wrought upon. We do not blame the harp because it is not the organ, nor constituted like it; neither do we blame the organ

because it possesses none of the hypersensitiveness of the Æolian harp. We take them as they are and make the best of them. We feel the need of both; both contribute largely to our enjoyment, and we do not wish them to lose their respective differences and become as each other. While differences in degree of sensitiveness are always respected, and indeed deliberately produced by human art in objects subject to the creative spirit of man, very few are ready to accord just judgment to these sensitive plants in the human family, without whom the world would be entirely at a loss for a supply of much that contributes above all else to human wealth and happiness.

The words medium and sensitive are now frequently interchanged. Many philosophers and scientists use the latter term exclusively when speaking of those who in a peculiar sense are instruments of the spirit-world; the term, we must say, is a thoroughly apposite one, as it exactly defines the nature of that mysterious something the possession of which singles out a minority of the human family, and causes them to differ essentially from the majority in their receptivity to surrounding influences.

In recent lectures from this platform we have pointedly alluded to the recent and indeed still prevailing controversies concerning mediums and their offences against society. We have endeavored to be fair to all parties implicated in the discussion, but must confess our sympathies naturally flow out in larger measure to the weaker and less protected side; and in the present stage of human development no one can say that for a person of no unusual moral stamina to be an extreme sensitive is to enjoy an enviable distinction from his fellows. But why is this so? Why should not extreme sensitiveness render its possessor peculiarly open to celestial influx? Cannot the higher powers shelter their instruments from every seducing influence that may possibly fall across their pathway? Yes, indeed they can, and indeed they do in the cases of those who are in truth their especial

instruments. But how many there are who are not as yet solely developed to the work of angelic beings, and who are yet capable of doing an immense amount of good among a class of people who can only be reached by messages from the unseen world coming to them from members of their own fraternity, and through the instrumentality of those with whom they associate on equal terms. Mediumship itself is never a curse, but rather a blessing; it may insure much trouble, anxiety, distress, and even sin; but out of it all comes some ultimate good, some truth is revealed, some culprit warned, some heart consoled, some mind enlightened.

The spirit-world exists, and it can do no one any good to remain in ignorance of the fact. Ignorance is never bliss except in seeming; it is never really a folly to be wise. In the days of Plato sophists encountered the learned Greek and tried to argue him out of his faith in the Socratic doctrine, which maintains that all knowledge is good and all ignorance evil; for, said these sophists, because of knowledge men suffer much. If they had not this knowledge which occasions them such pain, they would not suffer so. The wise man answers them by pointing out how necessary is the pain of growth, and what poor creatures we should be if we could never enjoy any of the actual beauties and pleasures of the universe, but had to remain eternally mere cyphers in existence. Seneca, the wise old Roman, says, concerning injuries, he who needs them not cannot be made to suffer from them, while those to whom they occasion suffering are by means of them raised to a sublimer altitude of being. It is a universal fact in human life that the power to enjoy and the power to suffer is the same power. You have none of you ever met a human being or an animal so delicately organized as to be capable of great sorrow and intense pain without finding one who could enjoy with the same exquisite intensity. Even in this world the law of compensation works far more perfectly than is usually supposed. Life's inequalities are more

apparent than real; there is a hidden balance that very few can even catch a glimpse of, which adjusts the scales far more evenly than the world is apt to think. No one has a right to judge another by himself; judge not, that ye be not judged, is a maxim we must always heed in order to be just; but the command judge not refers only to our conduct to our neighbors—we are to judge ourselves; our own consciences are born in us to enable us to do so. Self-judgment is a necessary duty. The condemnation of others is a sin, while the useless commiseration which ends in verbal pity of those who seem less happily circumstanced than ourselves, does nothing, practically, to redress the wrongs of society.

In the life of our departed brother, Charles H. Foster, we are brought face to face with an immense variety of almost incomprehensible contradictions. We find in him one who united the most singularly opposite elements in a single personality. He seems to have been perpetually swayed by the most widely divergent influences, some hurrying him on to ruin, others lifting him to loftiest heights of nobility and usefulness. He was indeed a singular man, far more unlike the ordinary than many concerning whom the most extended histories have been written. He was not an ordinary spirit-medium; there are few if any like him; few so sensitive as he. Taken all in all he was indeed a *rara avis*, a most interesting specimen of peculiarity; at once very positive and very negative, extremely self-willed and exceedingly pliant; swayed as easily as the Æolian harp by subtle, unsuspected influences, and, at the same time, persistent even to obstinacy in having his own way. He could not be controlled by any ordinary means, and yet he was controlled by unseen powers with such remarkable facility that the tests given through his organism numbered among them many of the most convincing proofs of spirit-ministry granted to the present century. Frankness, duty, loyalty to truth compel us, in our position as teacher of ethics and student of psychology, to lay before you,

our fellow-students of spiritual influence, the character and life of this man as we honestly conceive them to have been. We shall set down naught in malice, neither shall we strive to gloss over palpable errors; but when we point out a flaw or call attention to a weakness, it will be with the sole desire to help you to deal with similar cases of distress and folly as they come up before you in the daily walk of your own experience individually, as well as in that of those with whom you have to deal and whose career you can measurably influence.

The secular as well as the spiritualistic press has spoken loudly in praise of Charles H. Foster's mediumship, not only since his passing from the earthly body, but at frequent intervals during his earthly life. He was a great traveler both by land and sea, especially by land. He visited almost every section of his native land; his fame spread, and his name became a household word from Maine to California, and in every part of Europe there were those who knew of him and had the privilege of attending his séances. In England the impression he made upon the nobility was very great, and it was the same in the other countries which he visited. He was received everywhere; rank was forgotten, social barriers dissolved like ice before the mysterious power which accompanied him. The number of hearts he cheered and lives he blessed with revelations from the spirit-spheres is known only to those who can read the records of eternity. The good he did, the light he spread, was so great, so phenomenally bright, that when we dwell upon it its dazzling beams at once annihilate the shadows, and he stands before us only as a man of such rare genius that in the contemplation of his resplendent gifts we can see and remember nothing which could possibly cast a shade upon their lustre. But great gifts are often the possessions of most excitable and erratic persons; indeed physiologists are almost united in affirming that an abnormally excited condition of the nervous system is almost inseparable from very extraordinary genius. The

lives of great men not alone remind us that "we can make our lives sublime, and departing leave behind us footprints on the sands of time," they also tell us that many of these footprints will be danger signals as well as guide boards, warning us of perilous rocks and fearful precipices which stand between us and the dizzy heights of greatness. They tell us of the thorns which the fairest flowers conceal; of the deadly creatures that lie in wait to destroy in the fairest forests of the earth. In human experience, dealing with character and temptation, it is pretty much as it is with the physical earth. Where the skies are brightest, the verdure richest, the foliage thickest, the air balmiest, the flowers and fruits most gorgeous, luscious and abundant, there hide the deadliest reptiles, there the Upas casts its fatal shade, there the monsters of the forest prowl, there the air breathes poison as well as sweetness. There are no snakes in Lapland, no poisonous plants border the Artic Sea, no dread miasma breathes in the biting wind of Greenland. If we have the sweets of Java, we must encounter the perils also; if we must endure the rigors of the frigid zone, we are at least safe from the vapors of the tropics. The same sun which brings into being the loveliest things in nature, awakens the deadliest. So is it with human experience. In the moral realm, great gifts bring great temptations; great power for usefulness exposes its possessor to a thousand ills the commonplace, every-day member of society knows nothing of.

But while these illustrations and analogies tend to throw light upon the weaknesses as well as upon the strength of persons of unusual endowments, we must never allow these consolatory and explanatory thoughts to lessen our zeal in pointing all to the one only safeguard against all temptation, viz., the blazing star of moral sense, the polar star of conscience. However sensitive an individual may be, the moral law is no respecter of persons. The eternal energy of being whose *motions* produce the laws of life never stays in its course,

never deviates from its immutable career to favor or excuse even the most pliant of earth's children. And why? Surely not because there is no mercy in the Eternal; surely not because the rigors of Providence are such that there is no room for tenderness and pity in the heart of the Universal Spirit; by no means. Rather because of God's infinite goodness the law is never set aside; that great law of cause and effect, which appears to the materialist only as an inflexible, unconscious force, cold as ice and hard as marble, is to the true Spiritualist all aglow with divine love and wisdom. It is the eternal effluence of perfect goodness, and never works except to bless all on whom it operates. It may seem severe, but in reality it is always kind; and though from the standpoint of earthly time and mortal sense it may appear relentless and cruel, in the light of a happier clime, where all earth's mysteries are resolved and its darkness turned to glory, this resistless decree which ordains that all who err shall suffer, and that bitterly, even though they suffer in ignorance and weakness, shines forth as the gracious and blessed moral lever which lifts the spirit from its earthly weakness to celestial strength.

One of the hardest lessons the spirit has to learn is, that we must all suffer for our own good, even when we err through weakness, and not of *malice prepense*. There seems to be a pretty well established conviction in the minds of humanity, that when persons sin through willful choice of evil, through malice, and all uncharitableness, they deserve to suffer; but if one is endowed with a more sensitive organization than another, and if that organization and surrounding influences over which he has little, if any, control, cause him to stumble, then it seems hard and unjust that he should have to undergo the self-same penalty as they who err in spite of knowledge, far less provocation, and far greater ability to withstand temptation. The law cannot be changed; kick against it as we will, we cannot alter it. Repining at the inevitable never made things better and never can; so

instead of complaining at what we cannot help, it is surely wiser to face the question boldly, and seek for light to comprehend the law in its interior and beneficent action, that we may not be compelled to affect stoical resignation if we cease repining, but rather aid in the accomplishment of that gigantic task which Milton describes as justifying the ways of God to men.

False views of life here and hereafter, supported by a cruel and despotic theology, now happily fast giving place to more enlightened views of God and immortality, have done vastly much to increase the murmurs of mankind against the decrees of Providence or fate. The world is now but just beginning to view suffering in the light of education or unfoldment. Just so soon as trials and sorrows lose their primitive aspect, and come to be regarded as educational and elevating agencies, will the laws of being pass from under their eclipse, and show themselves what they truly are, wise and merciful dispensations of infinite indwelling as well as overruling Providence. The world seeks happiness, and will never be content without it; but happiness can be attained in only one way, and that through perfect purity of thought and deed; and this purity can only be reached by complete mastery over the lower nature. When the lower nature in one's self is completely under the control of reason and the moral sense, no temptations from without, whether coming from minds embodied or disembodied, have the slightest power to harm. Not weakness, not simple innocence even, will suffice; there must be strength of character, and fortitude attained by persistent spiritual effort. When this is gained, tempters innumerable may approach and ply their every wile, but the spirit is beyond seduction, as all they could work on has been outgrown.

It is quite unnecessary to employ a labored argument to prove that genius and gifts are not necessarily the products or associates of high moral character. In the spiritual economy of human nature, the intellect and

spirit are utterly distinct, though they both flow from the same primal source, and are eventually united in a more perfect state of being. One can be, and often is, unfolded apart from the other, both during earthly life, and also in those realms of spirit which cannot be said to be the abodes of "just men made perfect." Wootton says in a highly suggestive poem, that the earnest seeker after the highest wisdom daily prays for grace rather than gifts. Grace means virtue, beauty of character, unfoldment of soul. A graceful person, in a moral sense, is one of lovely character, while a graceless individual always means one who is devoid of moral symmetry. The slang phrase, "he is a scapegrace," really means he has escaped grace, is without moral integrity. Grace is, therefore, the leading feature of a truly moral person; but such an one need not be gifted; he may be dull, prosaic, not at all intellectual, and yet valued highly for his probity and many sterling characteristics. Conscientiousness is the leading organ in the brain of an exceedingly just and moral person; impulse, however, is the leading trait in the disposition of a genius. Impulse, of course, is not an evil in itself; it is indispensable to extreme sensitiveness and ready action. Highly mediumistic persons are always exceedingly impulsive; if they were not so they could never yield as they do to every touch of inspiration that falls upon them from surrounding states.

The relation of mediumship to morality, and morals to mediumship, is always a very difficult one to comprehend, and only those can deal with the question at all who are either highly mediumistic themselves, or have made mediumship a life study. Sensitives and poets are very near relations; indeed, they are often the same *genus*. Many poets have had experiences which have clearly proved to them that they were mediums. Under cover of "poetic license" they have told many a truth in verse concerning their actual spiritual experiences. Virgil, leading Danté through the spirit-world, is more of

actual history than romance. Homer, discoursing with, as well as of, the dwellers in the unseen world, is more fact than fiction; but as we come to analyze the writers and singers of our sweetest songs, are we not often pained, and even at times momentarily shocked and disgusted, as we read of their shortcomings? These have unquestionably been exaggerated from two causes: one is, that genius, being superior, always excites the envy of mediocrity, and thus arouses mediocre minds to vilify its possessor; the other is the puritanic tendency of many minds to look upon music, poetry, and everything not rigidly utilitarian, as a snare of the evil one, and therefore any faults to be found with poets and others of similar type, are brought forward in support of this most erroneous conclusion. But, notwithstanding the allowance we must make for misrepresentation in the case of Robert Burns and Edgar A. Poe, for instance, it would be folly to shut our eyes to the fact that the stories of their weaknesses have at least some foundation in fact. They were nervous, highly strung, hypersensitive, and altogether unfitted to cope with the ordinary business of the commercial world, without being drawn hither and thither by the sway of passions, whose psychological influence over them was for woe, and not for weal. Even Shakspeare, the immortal bard of Avon, who has taught us such tremendous moral lessons, was not altogether exempt from frailty. A psychological study of such cases never leads us to censure those who have been drawn into the maelstrom anything like so severely as we censure the maelstrom into which they have been drawn.

Society exerts an enormous influence over all its members. Thoughts are palpable entities to the sight of spirit. It is well-nigh impossible for an extremely susceptible person to be in an atmosphere of purity without feeling the higher nature awakening, or to roam through the haunts of iniquity without feeling an almost irresistible impulse luring him into the midst of vice. The prohibitionists who would forcibly close the saloons and

forbid the manufacture and sale of liquor have got hold of one side of the truth on the temperance question pretty firmly, as have also those who are endeavoring to repress the social evil by legislation, for there is a subtle invitation to sin in the very atmosphere of a saloon or any haunt of riot. The difficulty many experience in passing a saloon is a real one, as there are those inside whose thoughts go out to draw others in, and the extreme sensitive cannot help being both a mind-reader and a mesmeric subject to a considerable extent.

The perils of mediumship like Mr. Foster's are very great, as he and others situated somewhat like him are not sheltered by a powerful band of intellectual influences who employ their instruments to teach morality. The public inspirational teacher or writer, one who never has in the course of his duties to submit to the control of the individual spirit-friends of those who are benefited by the instruction which is given through him, being on the plane of general topics, engaged in the promulgation of ideas, lifted above the plane of the personal into the universal, is of course in a much safer position than he or she who must admit sitter after sitter into the privacy of home or office, and there yield to the influence of whatsoever spirit may present himself, or else fail in the discharge of the very labor he is specially developed to perform. How many there are who admire the intellectual iceberg glittering on the public rostrum, lighted up with the sunshine of exalted inspiration and flashing forth ray after ray of glorious spiritual idea, who point with scorn and speak harshly of those equally necessary mediums who sit in their private rooms day after day, holding interviews with hundreds of private persons who come to them for personal tests and guidance. The platform orator may be dignified, impervious and entirely beyond the reach of the temptations hourly surrounding the sensitive who devotes his energies to another kind of work. The one holds an audience by means of the psychological influence of a band of guides who can and do

rebut all opposing forces, and keep at a distance all personal influences, who, if they assumed control or gained any ascendancy, would prevent the work that the rostrum is founded to accomplish. The private personal test-medium must yield to the various influences that cluster thickly round him; he must bend to every spirit who would influence him, or he could not do his special work. He sins and suffers, and then gets up again, a stronger and a wiser spirit; but the follies of his career are due far more to the psychology of his surroundings than any willful resistance of right on his own part.

It is not an open question to us whether mediumship of this perilous type has done good or not; we know it has done immense good; millions have been comforted and blessed by the actual demonstration of spirit presence and identity which it has revealed; millions whom the platform and the press at first could not have reached. But a state of affairs which brings about suffering is not an ultimate state; a perilous condition is not always to continue, and now, after nearly thirty-eight years of spirit-communion in this century and in this country, it is high time that the community arise and set to work to improve the moral tone of mediumship; not by attacking and persecuting the unfortunate sensitive, who is, in nine cases out of ten, the almost irresponsible victim of social perfidy, but by so purifying their own thoughts, deeds and words that when they consult a medium, instead of bringing with them a sphere of lust and liquor, they enter the presence of a modern medium as the ancients entered their temples and went before the oracles prior to that period of decadence which followed a prostitution of gifts divine. We do not ask you to be superstitious, or attribute supernatural powers to mediums; they are only frail and fallible human beings, but their very sensitiveness which is their bane is also their blessing, and yours in a marked degree; for were it not that some could see where you are blind, that some could *hear where you are deaf*, the gates of the immortal world

could never stand ajar for those whose straining eyes and ears would fain catch glimpses of the life within the veil, and catch the echo of the songs their spirit friends now sing.

But it is not all *couleur de rose*, that life beyond the grave, between which and yourself the medium stands as a gate ajar. Those who have sinned on earth are suffering there; all follies must be repented of and at length outgrown, and he who can only paint sometimes the darker aspects of the picture is one who can reveal a needed truth, and warn man against the by-paths, if it be not as yet his happy lot to open the door into the lighted banquet-hall of celestial gladness. The life of Charles H. Foster brought to light many and many a hidden spring of action, and threw immense light upon many a secret principle of being. He yielded sometimes far too readily to flattery and the seducer's wiles; often, exhausted by constant strain on his vitality, he resorted to unwise means of recuperating strength. Such indiscretions, brought about far more by his surroundings than his own deliberate intent, shattered his physique and beclouded his mind, so that for a time it was feared his reason had left him. But the cloud passed away, his sufferings left him with a clearer mind and a deeper insight of spiritual truth than he had ever known while in the heyday of prosperity; when *fêted* and caressed alike by millionaire and peasant, he was the lionized wonder of the age. Worldly dissipation had some attractions for him, and the mists of earth veiled the splendor of the sun of spirit. After years of suffering, he recovered all he had lost of spiritual perception, and gained a sweetness and mellowness of character he had never possessed before. He was always good-hearted, generous, prodigal in giving; he was no miser hoarding up treasures to clog his spirit when the hour came for its release; he was a spendthrift, some would say, but a spendthrift is an angel in comparison with a miser. He earned money, a great deal of it, and he deserved all he

got; he however did much gratuitous work, and was never hard on those whose material means forbade them paying him his fee. His was the life of a successful professional medium, one in which the sweets and bitters, flowers and thorns of life quickly alternate and freely abound. He lives in the memories and hearts of thousands; they cannot but remember that it is to him they owe their first glimpse of spiritual existence.

His passing away was delightful to behold. Calm, tranquil, serene as the gentle twilight of a hot, tempestuous summer's day, were the closing moments of his earthly pilgrimage. The day had been very trying, the heat had been very great, the lightning vivid, the thunder loud, the rain had poured down in torrents, the rivers had swollen and overflowed their banks; it had been a feverish, fitful day; a day of great excitement and of great achievement; of vivid contrast, of lurid light and awful shade. Darkness had come before sundown; objects had been veiled by a darkling cloud; the sun had been eclipsed — but before it set and the calm night followed, all the noises had been hushed and the sun had peeped forth from behind its curtain; the clouds rolled away; the moon rose; the evening star appeared; one by one the twinkling stars came forth, and the day had ended in a sweet calm; the air was purer and the sky clearer because of the tempest.

Peace at the last. In the full realization of the presence of angel-friends, Charles H. Foster entered the realm of spirit, greeted by innumerable spirits, who crowded round him, thanking him for being the instrument through whom they reached their friends on earth. Many who had been the recipients on earth of blessings through his mediumship gathered round him, welcoming and strengthening him.

Now the worn-out body is resting in the bosom of its mother-earth. The spirit, whose origin and home is not in matter, has gone on to join the mighty army of invisibles, who in this cycle are commissioned to enlighten

mankind by bearing special tidings from their state beyond the river. You will hear from him again. His body being dead, he yet will speak. He is not dead, but only risen—only entered upon that wondrous life, glimpses of which it was his high privilege to be the means of showing to so many while he dwelt on earth.

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

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THE LOST CONTINENT, ATLANTIS;

Or, The World before the Flood.

AT a time when floods are occasioning the greatest commotion, comment and distress in this very city and its vicinity, every newspaper being almost filled with graphic details of a local deluge, the thought of the public naturally reverts to those fearful and tremendous overflows which desolated the world long before the Adamic race, if it be only six thousand years of age, as Genesis infers, came into existence. The Pentateuch is doubtless correct in asserting that one particular race of mankind, the red race, (Hadaama) came into existence in the eastern world as a distinct and peculiar people, distinguished from their brethren who, according to the same narrative, were created previously; but it appears certain to us that the antiquity of the red race is far greater than six thousand years, while, according to the statement of some geologists, we may reasonably infer that there were human beings upon some portions of this planet as long ago as five hundred thousand years and possibly at a still more ancient date.

There are five distinct races of mankind clearly traceable, marked off from each other by sharply defined peculiarities; these are the Negro, the Malay, the Mongolian, the Caucasian and the Red. It has always been a mystery to students of ethnology how these races originated. Can they be traced back to a common origin, to a single pair of primal ancestors, or did they come into existence at various times in different countries? Are there any arbitrary mental peculiarities severally attached to them? Is one more educatable than another,

or are their distinctions purely outward? These questions were asked very frequently during the antislavery agitations a quarter of a century ago, and to-day, though the negro has been emancipated and admitted to all the rights of citizenship, and although some negroes have graduated from Fiske University, thus proving themselves just as intelligent as white men, when equal liberties and opportunities of culture are given them, and although people are ready to admit that a negro differs from a white man physically, rather than mentally, the American Indian is yet viewed with prejudice by the bulk of the populace of the United States; and it is a hard matter to convince the American government and the majority of American citizens, that the long-suffering and much-oppressed red man should be regarded in all things as a brother.

Indians and Chinamen are now the pet aversions of the American citizen, especially in those districts where the foreign element most largely prevails. The North American Indian, though sadly degenerate to-day, is without doubt, unless all archæological testimony must be set aside as worthless, the descendant of a once mighty and highly civilized race, which was in communion with Atlantis, and by means of Atlantis with Europe, many thousands of years before the date assigned by orthodoxy for the origin of man. We have only to question the more intelligent "braves" to find out that, instead of being a simple race of semi-savage aborigines, they are possessed of antique and marvelous traditions and customs, so closely allied to those of classic Europe, ancient Egypt, and the far-orient, that we are almost forced to maintain that time was when they either came hither from a distant part of the world, or else were in close sympathy and constant converse with the ancient centres of civilization.

The study of mythology on a new basis is now engaging many unusually brilliant minds and painstaking investigators into the growth of civilization. **Mythology**

has four distinct aspects, and may be studied under four distinct heads, — astronomical, practical, religious and historical. It is with the last of these aspects of mythology that we have to deal when searching for vestiges of buried races, though in its three other senses it affords us interesting proofs of the growth and spread of ideas and symbols. The history of a very ancient time has unquestionably been preserved, though perhaps not with so much clearness as some might wish, in the oral traditions, religious ceremonies, architectural remains and ancient literature of the world. Until quite recently Sanskrit was very rarely studied ; to-day it is becoming quite the fashion to take it in as a portion of the student's curriculum.

Egyptian hieroglyphics were until recently a dead letter to Europe and America ; they are now aglow with meaning, thanks to the laborious persistency of many gifted minds who have made Egyptology a science.

Prof. Smyth, astronomer royal of Scotland, in "Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid," states that whoever designed the pyramid of Gizeh must have been miraculously endowed by heaven, and then he goes on to fortify his assumption that God commanded an ancient priest (doubtless Melchisedec) to build an altar to the Lord in the midst of Egypt, by quotations from the 19th chapter of Isaiah, and other portions of the Bible. Now it is not for us to deny the heaven-sent inspiration of an ancient order called Melchisedec, which flourished and had its centre in Egypt long ago. Doubtless the sons of Osiris, called "sons of light," and "sons of God," in olden days, were sons of the sun in two senses ; in that they were astronomers, students of the sun, and the starry heavens, and also students of spiritual science, recognizers of the divine sun of spiritual being whose light was symbolized forth to them in the glorious orb of day, but which in every human being was the central soul, or divine soul, the individual deity in man.

Solar worship was without doubt originally a purely

piritual system, while the greatest scientists of ancient days were also the deepest students of God and immortality. But granting the presence in Egypt, long ago, of these wise and noble orders of spiritually endowed mortals who were indeed mediums or mediators between earth and higher realms of being, we must not allow orthodox assumptions to lead us to suppose that only here and there was there to be found a favored child of heaven, and that all around was thick darkness.

Herodotus assumes that Egypt's greatest pyramid was built under direction of some mind of marvelous intelligence, by at least one hundred thousand captives, and he thereby conveys the idea that Egypt, at the time of its erection, must have been in a pitiable condition; for great learning on the one hand, in the sole custody of a learned few, and abject slavery, on the other, for the mass of the people, suggests a picture of anything but true civilization which always leads to true democracy; the government of the people, for and by the people. We regard the Pyramids of Egypt as far older than four thousand years; we believe them to be the remains of a long perished age of spiritualism, vaguely called in traditional history, a period when the country was governed by the gods. Now these gods suggest to us, first, mortals and then spirits; in a word, mortals who had been deified after their passage from earth, and also persons who, during their earthly career, were not only possessed of wisdom superior to that of the majority, but who, by reason of what might now be called their mediumistic powers, were instrumental in greatly enlightening humanity.

The New Testament says that Jesus defined gods, as those on whom the spirit of God came. The opposition to these gods which so strongly marked the career of the Hebrews, was unquestionably a vigorous protest on the part of the Jews against the ancestor worship and excessive hero worship carried to a ridiculous extreme in many quarters, to-day and in this country no less than in the

ancient world. Though it is always well to revere the memory and strive to emulate the examples of those who have gone before, so far as their examples are good examples, and while we may safely and helpfully think of them as still taking an active interest in spirit in the land they loved on earth, nothing is more foolish and pernicious in its effects on a rising generation than the fulsome flattery, which soon leads to insane idolatry, constantly paid to departed heroes.

Romulus was deified by the Romans, and yet from all accounts, he was not a saint, while in the body. To come closely home, Garfield and Grant were, both of them, good and brave men and rendered distinguished service to their country; but their lives certainly did not legitimately call for the hysterical eulogiums which have been heaped upon them since they have quitted the material body. Who knows but history with its proverbial faculty of repeating itself, will not some centuries hence have transformed Garfield, Grant and others into solar myths and ancient deities. It becomes increasingly clear to the modern student, with every forward step in comparative theology, philology and other modern sciences, that the classics, so long regarded as merely fine specimens of ancient composition and relics of a fantastic heathendom, really contain in language, somewhat fanciful and metaphorical, a large portion of ancient history; the history of periods of which Herodotus says nothing. As certain geologists call every event which occurred less than eighty thousand years ago, "recent," we may surely call all history modern, which does not carry us back, at the least, eleven or twelve thousand years.

The period assigned by Solon for the loss of Atlantis, about nine thousand years before his day, and he lived six hundred B.C. and therefore nearly twenty-five hundred years ago, only marks the culmination of a period; the ending of a period of time occupying from its commencement nearly twenty-six thousand years. In the grand cycle are included twelve lesser cycles, each

enduring for about twenty-one hundred and seventy years, and it seems that in the primal dispensation, the central and the ultimate are the most significant in every grand cycle, which is one "grand year of the Pleiades."

The date of the destruction of Atlantis must have marked the ending of one of those immense periods of time, at least so far as the western hemisphere is concerned; though, according to Oahspe, a curious collection of ancient knowledge and spiritual communications, there was a continent named Pan, sunk in the Pacific Ocean more than twelve thousand years before the sinking of Atlantis. This admission is in perfect accordance with the statement put forward by many advanced minds who have studied the periodic revolutions of the earth, that land and water completely change places over the entire surface of the globe during each grand cycle. Of course the submergence of land no one is called upon to accept on the "ipse dixit" of any school of teachers. If land lies at the bottom of the ocean, it must be discoverable by modern research, and it has been actually discovered, extending over a vast area beneath what is now known as the Atlantic Ocean, a name doubtless derived from Atlantis, which must originally have been an enormous continent, extending northward as far as the British Isles at least.

Ignatius Donnelly of Minnesota has, in his fascinating and highly intelligent account of the antediluvian world, done perhaps more than any other single individual since the days of Plato, to bring Atlantis before the notice of the public. His work is written with great deliberation and thoroughness and will well repay the most thoughtful perusal. His narrative opens with a statement of the purpose of the book, which he describes as an attempt to demonstrate several distinct and novel propositions. As the propositions are in reality peculiarly distinct and also novel and stated with great ability, we should advise all who wish to make this subject a study, to read "Atlantis," if they can possibly procure a copy from a library.

We hope that, if the report is true that the work is out of print, a new edition may soon be published.

Mr. Donnelly takes the ground that Atlantis was not only the true antediluvian world and, in his opinion, the region in which man first rose from barbarity to a civilized condition, but that it was also the historic foundation for the Garden of Eden, the Hesperides, the Elysian Fields, Olympus, and many other celebrated creations of mythologic art, mythology being, in reality, merely embellished history. He further asserts that it is his conviction that the gods and goddesses of Greece, Phœnicia, Hindostan and Scandinavia, widely separated lands, as you are well aware, were originally Atlantean heroes and rulers, while the fanciful acts, mythologically attributed to them, are the result of an imperfect recollection and tradition of historical events. Sun worship is regarded by this author as the religion of Atlantis, from which country it had established itself both in Egypt and Peru, and, strange to say, the religion of these widely sundered countries was almost identical, and, in spite of Christianity, is not yet wholly abolished; even Christianity itself is, in some respects, a direct outgrowth and perpetuation of this same solar worship of antiquity.

The most ancient civilization now directly traceable along lines of written and monumental history, is that of Egypt, which was no doubt a colony of Atlantis many thousands of years before Atlantis sank. It is to Egypt we must turn, rather than to any other land, for authentic record of the condition of the civilized world in remote antiquity, while the bed of the ocean must be appealed to, to show us how, in the course of ages, old mother earth has been tempest-tossed and riven, and, in alternating periods of sleep and activity, work and rest, has become, at one time the theatre for the enactment of the gorgeous drama of human strife and conquest, and then, the scene of direful catastrophe and tragic ending to the play, when the actors and their stage sank together beneath the waves, only to reappear in other spheres and

in future years, in the birth of a new civilization and the resurrection of their terrestrial abodes from the waters.

The Jewish Sabbatical law, with reference to the land being permitted to rest every seventh year, has never been neglected by farmers without resulting in the impoverishment of the soil. Many farms in Maine and other eastern states are now so poor as to be scarcely worth cultivating, while a great deal of land in England seems as though it could no longer bear the heavy and continuous strain put upon it. Land, as well as man, requires periodic rest, and no rest for the earth is so perfect as that which it enjoys under the water during long periods of submergence. Lands which, like Egypt, are dependent upon the overflow of rivers for their fertility, are to some extent illustrations of this natural law; the rich alluvial deposit produced by the annual overflow of the Nile makes its banks for many miles on either side fertile to the highest degree. When Palestine was a rich, fruitful and prosperous land, the Jordan was a large river; it is now only a small stream; if it ever flows again with its original magnitude, Palestine may again become literally a land flowing with milk and honey and yielding in abundance all things conducive to the comfort and luxury of man.

There can be no doubt that Atlantis from its situation was a veritable earthly Paradise, and that for several thousand years it enjoyed an unapproachable eminence among all other lands in the salubrity of its climate, the richness of its soil and the culture of its inhabitants. Situated in the midst of the sea, it was indeed the centre of the earth; the four quarters of the globe lying on either side of it and all being accessible to the dwellers upon it, who were masters in the arts of commerce and navigation. To enter fully into the cause of its destruction, we should have to engage in scientific and geographical considerations necessarily ruled out for this lecture by the imperative demands of brevity; but we can enumerate two or three sufficient reasons without

which the theory of its submergence would be wholly incomplete.

Geology teaches us that the history of the earth is a record of successive risings and fallings of surface. Mr. Donnelly has inserted in his book a picture of certain coal measures of Pennsylvania in which he shows coal at many different elevations below the surface. Now we know that coal is a vegetable substance and is formed only by the decomposition of vegetable substances; coal mines under the ocean are unmistakable evidences that what is now the bed of the ocean has been many times dry land. The Australian and Pacific archipelagoes are without doubt mountain tops of drowned continents. These in course of time will become habitable again, and the land whereon we now stand will then be as deeply under the water as Atlantis and Pan now are. It was only with the gradual wearing away of what was once the immense continent of Atlantis that Europe and America were slowly formed; similar processes are still going on in various parts of Europe, notably in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, where the land is rapidly rising, while in South America, the Andes have sunk hundreds of feet in less than a century. The sea is now rapidly encroaching on China, while the land is gaining on the sea at its antipodes. There is conclusive geological evidence that Great Britain was once at least seventeen hundred feet under water and that the British Isles rose from their watery prison covered with alluvial deposits. Even the desert of Sahara was once the bed of the ocean; that vast, arid desert being but an agglomeration of sand grains, rounded by the action of waves. The submergence of Atlantis was simply the last of a long series of changes by which the whole ancient continent was lost and new continents brought into being.

The suddenness of the destruction of Atlantis is, however, the principal point in its story as narrated by Plato, which perplexes the general reader. Could so vast an island as Atlantis, even in its diminished form, have been

utterly destroyed in so brief a period of time that Plato could have had any favorable historic grounds for assuming that it was destroyed in a single day and night? While no doubt twenty-four hours would be too short a time to set for the duration of the terrific earthquakes, awful volcanic eruptions and fearful rains, accompanied by raging seas, all of which together swept the island entirely away, there have been parallels in the past few centuries to such an event, though on a smaller scale, which destroy forever the theory of the antecedent impossibility or even improbability of such a catastrophe. We have no sufficient grounds for a denial that it could ever have occurred, since we now possess numerous well authenticated records of islands lifted out of the water and of others sinking into it to rise no more, in an incredibly short space of time.

About one hundred years ago, Iceland was the scene of the most terrific convulsions. About a month previous to an eruption on the mainland, a submarine volcano burst forth in the sea, thirty miles from the shore. In consequence of the water ejected by it, navigation was greatly impeded for over one hundred miles. A new island also appeared about the same time which disappeared about a year after. Coeval with these events was the fearful Icelandic earthquake which, according to popular history, destroyed nearly one-fifth of the entire island. Many villages were totally consumed by fire and water, which acted as they usually do in concert, while a mass of lava was thrown on to the land sufficient to form a high mountain. In the tropics such occurrences are by no means infrequent. The island of Java seems to have been especially singled out as the scene of such catastrophes; a few days only being required in 1822 to almost desolate the island. Floods, volcanic outbursts and earthquakes uniting to destroy, soon make short work of any country they may visit and against which the fury of their action is directed.

Did time permit, it would be a very easy task to bring

forward numberless illustrations of the direful work accomplished in almost every part of the world by these triple forces. In the Mediterranean, on the Canary Islands, in India, to say nothing of Italy, where the eruptions of Vesuvius have completely buried the cities of the plain, we find ample corroboration of Plato's record, at least to the extent of demonstration that the reasons he assigned for the destruction of Atlantis were by no means fabulous ones; while Iceland, which lies near the axis of a vast volcanic area, has frequently been the scene of most terrific disturbances. To those who wish to become posted in the history of these appalling changes in the surface of the earth, a study of geology is necessary; but for our present purpose we need not enquire very deeply into the ins and outs of these upheavals; the records they have left behind them are ample evidence of their occurrence. What will most interest our readers will probably be an account of the inhabitants of Atlantis, prior to and at the time of their destruction, and as we cannot pause to prove every assertion we make by elaborate references to history, we must beg you all to listen to our statements, and then, as you have opportunity, seek to verify them by personal study of the matters to which they refer.

Our next lectures, which will deal with Prehistoric America and then with Egypt, will contain fuller verifications of the statements we are now about to make, and we hope these three lectures will be regarded as three parts of one address, to be read consecutively, that our positions may not remain wholly unsupported in the minds of our readers.

Whatever may be said, and much may truly be said, of the advance of civilization and the progress of the race, we cannot fail to note that there are traces everywhere that the earth is both a sepulchre and a cradle. Everywhere ruins are to be found of such magnitude and mystery that we stand before them breathless with mingled awe and admiration; for while the naturalists are point-

ing us back across the ages to find our primal ancestors in differentiated apes, the monumental records of the world are such as to convince every beholder that ancestor worship has not sprung into existence as a world-wide religious ceremony unsupported by knowledge; modern races have indeed had worshipful ancestors.

Who can vie with the prehistoric races in manufactures and in architecture even at this day? We must all admit that the world was once very wide awake in the long, long ago; that it went to sleep, and is now waking again.

Atlantis sank at the close of a long, bright day of marvelous achievement; other races then arose and, one by one, reached certain heights of greatness and then decayed. We to-day are standing on the threshold of an epoch, unprecedented in the annals of the world; for whatever may have been the glory of a lost Eden, there is always a golden age to come more glorious by far than all that has been lost. "Lost arts and sciences," is a common but really incorrect phrase, though a very natural one, taking mediæval ages into consideration; but, through the darkest night, the lamp of knowledge was never quenched, the ever-burning lamps in Rosicrucian temples were fitting emblems of the spark of knowledge which could never die. Mystic symbols, imposing ceremonies, occult rites and all the imposing paraphernalia pertaining to the mystic orders, came into existence far more to preserve history alive and protect historians, men of science, and those endowed with spiritual gifts, than because they were necessary to express spiritual or historic truth.

The mythologies were designed to preserve history and science; the guilt of Socrates in the eyes of Athenian legislators consisted not in any sin against law and order, but only in his rending of the mystic veil of secrecy and telling the populace at large what the mysteries really signified. An aggressive and selfish priesthood

never tolerates any one who works to enlighten the multitude. When the true nature of the gods and goddesses of Greece becomes known, we shall then find Homer's characters representing rulers of Atlantis. The personal element in the mythos carries us directly into the presence of renowned men of ancient days. They were actual personalities whose memories were revered and around whose histories legends thickly clustered.

Of the four elements in mythology the first or actually historic is the most interesting to the student of the development of the various races of mankind. The second element in mythology is spiritualistic; the departed still continue to take an interest in the affairs of earth; being what men call dead, they yet speak; they are still alive in spirit and the seer beholds them and converses with them, while the eyes of ordinary mortals are holden that they do not see them. A third element in mythology is astronomical; a fourth is anthropological. As the learned wrote in cipher, they also wrote in quadruple style; they recorded history, related spiritual experiences, dealt with astronomical facts, and represented the contending powers in human character all at once. We shall never really understand the classic authors until we study them from these four points of view; any one point may suffice to make the story interesting and instructive; but the key to Homer will not be found until we read him in this fourfold light. It is of course in the purely historical way that mythology opens up to us a knowledge of the ancient world, a knowledge which we can gain from the poor, untutored Indian tribes far better than from many a learned master in our academies.

From Atlantis as a centre, America and Europe were alike fed with the bread of knowledge, and it was not till Atlantis perished that the American races became so degenerated, by being left to themselves, cut off from centres of intelligence, that they dwindled slowly away into the semi-barbarism of so-called aborigines. The

Atlantians must have been kings, queens, and priests in knowledge; the very teachers and inspirers of many a surrounding country, and from them originally must have been handed to posterity those surprising reminiscences of half-forgotten culture which so thickly strew the records of all peoples, and the earth itself bears testimony to the words of the gospel, "that if men should hold their peace, the stones themselves would cry out." Stones are crying out all over the earth to-day. It is to the stony tables of history, written upon with the finger of time, buried deeply beneath the sod, that we must turn for a satisfactory solution of the condition of the old Atlanteans. These stony witnesses inform us that the Atlanteans must have been all that tradition says they were.

Plato's account is none too glowing. If it fails at all to depict their actual condition, it fails in meagerness, rather than in exaggeration. To reconstruct Atlantis so as to form a vivid mental picture of the ancient world, you must picture to yourselves an island of vast dimensions occupied by an imperial race of men and women, varying in appearance from almost Caucasian whiteness to almost a dark brown color; tall, graceful, athletic, well developed in physical symmetry, highly intellectual, the brow expanded, the coronal region of the brain full, the back brain not deficient, but subordinate to the cerebrum. You must conceive of their natural surroundings as attractive in the extreme. Towering mountains, picturesque valleys, high table lands, rivers broad and full, flowing in every direction, and completely intersecting the country, rendering vegetation extremely luxurious. Among the animals you may include the horse, the dog, the ox, and many others which are familiar to all Americans and Europeans. Among the fruits and vegetables, you may count the date, fig, orange, pomgranate, maize, rice, grape, and many another delicacy which is found on modern tables, besides others not common to North America. The climate you may regard as diversified

temperate in the north, almost tropic in the extreme south, but healthful everywhere, through the prevalence of ocean gales, the shades of immense mountains, and the airs from abundant lakes and rivers.

The government of the people attained, without doubt, to ideal republicanism before its climax was reached ; but for many centuries Atlantis was divided into ten kingdoms ruled over by ten kings. In Plato's story of an ideal republic, he draws copiously from history besides freely indulging in prophecy. Mutilated and imperfect though his picture of ideal republicanism is in many respects, cruel though some of his devices for improving and perfecting the race appear, we cannot doubt but that in an ideal state of society there will be no chance for the propagation of evil and deformity. It can never be the desire of the benefactors of mankind that evils, sicknesses and deformities should be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth. The time will assuredly come in the future when all such miseries and errors will be outgrown, but that they will not be overcome by cruelty we may rest assured. Perhaps there never was a time when they were entirely absent from any community, but the time is surely coming when they will be. The Greeks, who had imbibed the highest wisdom extant, through their recourse to the art and literary treasures of the most advanced peoples of the ancient world, accumulated in Egypt, which country they ruled under the Ptolemies, laid the greatest stress on physical perfection ; but while they did well enough to strive to cultivate it by means of gymnasia, they unfortunately lost sight of the inevitable connection between morals, strength and beauty. Moral degeneracy, decrepitude of mind, a lowered tone of thought, necessarily led to a depletion of physical strength, and the loss of that world-renowned glory on which the Greeks so justly prided themselves.

When we contrast the majestic beauty of the Greek deities with the puny expressions of sanctity furnished

by mediæval Christianity, we cannot wonder that there are not wanting many to-day who bid us go to the philosophers, and not to the fathers, for our moral and religious training. Hercules is none too large and powerful for a true saint; Apollo, Venus and Juno are none too beautiful; but, as there is a great deal lacking in the mediæval monk and nun who picture one side only of human attainment, so there is also much to be added to the deities of the Pantheon before we can present forms of outward symmetry fully betokening the innate powers of a truly cultured mind. Henry Bulwer (Lord Lytton) in his "Coming Race," gives us in the Vril Ya, a very fine picture of the Atlantian race at its best and highest, while at the same time, his fervid fancy, rare inspirational genius, enables him to look ahead and behold the coming man attain to most of the excellences, but avoiding most of the faults of his well-nigh forgotten ancestors. If naturalists can point us to monkeys as our forefathers, historians can show us where the shield of the monkey has been dropped and the human spirit has burst triumphant from its animal environment, showing the outcome of involution and evolution at once.

We are to-day nearing an epoch when even the culture of Atlantis will be distanced by achievements the old world never reached; for, with the onward sweep of the democracy of culture, we cannot fail to see that the enlightenment of the whole earth and the liberalization of all humanity will be the necessary result of all the growth and turmoil of the ages.

PREHISTORIC AMERICA.

WHO WERE THE MOUND BUILDERS?

IN our last lecture upon Atlantis, we took occasion to remark that Atlantis, as a central island naturally partook of the character of a source whence knowledge flowed in streams on either side to the Occident and to the Orient. We have already called your attention to the wonderfully near relation, we might almost say identity, which exists between cultivated Greek mythology of the classic age and the traditions of the much maligned and greatly underrated American Indians. From the Pacific slope far towards the east are tribes of Indians whose character, government, religion, history and legends, all go to prove that they originally descended from a highly cultivated parent stock; their present semi-barbaric condition is due to a variety of causes, prominent among which is the fact that their ancestors were cut off in some almost immemorial age from every kind of intercourse with other peoples.

It is now almost universally regarded as an indisputable fact that commerce is the great enlightener and civilizer of the nations. Progress and education always follow in the track of large and free commercial enterprises. Greece and Rome owed their supremacy in their palmyest days, very largely, to their excellent roads into neighboring territories and the good ships they so successfully manned as they traded between three continents. England to-day owes almost all her prosperity to the fact that the British Isles are islands, which, though insignificant in size, are tremendously influential because of the control over the high seas and far-off countries exerted by the inhabitants of Great Britain.

Intermarriage may be, and doubtless is, well nigh fatal to the preservation of a single tribe or clan whose boast it is that they are a peculiar people, and if, as in the case of the Israelites, the idea is that they are a marvelously superior people, entrusted with a heaven-appointed mission to propagate the knowledge of divine truth upon the earth, so as to be literally the salt of the earth and the city set upon the hill which the Jewish nation has always claimed to be, intermarriage must necessarily water the stock and frustrate, to a considerable degree, the very purpose for which the distinct nation exists; but when an inferior, a less developed people, is cut off from intercourse with other nations, instead of a high level being maintained, a low level is sure to ensue. Even in cases such as that of Israel, free dispersion over all the lands of the earth has done much to broaden the knowledge, sharpen the wits, and in every way increase the intelligence of Abraham's descendants. We never find that the man or woman who has lived through a long life in some peaceful valley among the hills or on some steep mountain side, isolated from the companionship of all humanity save a few isolated beings similarly situated, has become really great, unless news has constantly travelled to that shady nook, informing its inhabitants of the general state of the world outside their little crevice in the globe.

Of course in exceptional instances, a prophet may arise among the most secluded people and show forth the wonders of inspiration in the power of spirit to travel where the body does not move; but these singular phenomena occur but seldom, and are indeed so rare as to be thought miraculous. They are the exceptions to the rule, and the rule is that one needs to come pretty near to humanity as a whole, either by personal contact with representatives of different nations, by travel in divers countries, or by keeping constantly connected, by means of newspapers and other sources of information, with almost the whole world at once.

The Atlanteans from their peculiarly favorable natural situation, surrounded completely by the sea and sufficiently near to Europe, Africa and America to have free access to many countries, became, in the natural order of things, the very heart of the civilization of the world before the great deluge of, say twelve thousand years ago. Egypt on the one hand, and Central America on the other, were undoubtedly the principal points which they directly touched in their excursions from continent to continent. Later developments led to the colonization by Atlantis of almost every section of the globe; but in the southern parts of North America and the northern parts of South America, as well as across the isthmus, we find innumerable, and, we venture to say, irrefutable traces of their presence and conquest.

Who were the Aztecs? who were the Mound Builders? are questions asked to-day on every hand. All over the Mississippi Valley, in the state of Ohio, as well as in the south and extreme west of the United States, we find relics of undeterminable antiquity, all pointing to a race who, as artificers and architects, can scarcely be said to have superiors, if they have equals, to-day in this country or abroad.

When the Spaniards took possession of Brazil, Peru, Mexico, and the West Indies, and all the region thereabout, they found so many unmistakable evidences of prehistoric culture, that their strict allegiance to the Roman church caused them to suppress all direct information concerning what they found, which might prove hostile to the interests of their religion, though it did not prevent their enriching themselves with the spoils of these ancient peoples and carrying to Spain trophies of such value that the exchequer of the Spanish nation in Europe for many years depended almost entirely upon findings on trans-Atlantic shores. No sane person supposes for a moment that the marvelous work, evidently accomplished by human hands in the remote past, was accomplished by almost naked savages; neither can any one

if a right mind imagine that pyramids, temples, palaces, houses, were produced by nature independent of man; neither is the conclusion to be tolerated for an instant, that the devil imitated Christianity before the birth of Jesus, as some religious fanatics have assumed. We must face the question fairly and boldly, letting conventional prejudices and errors fly like chaff before the whirlwind under the all-searching rays of truth's revelation. Stones are crying out in these modern days. Men have held their peace and the stones are now speaking with tongues more eloquent than those of any human historian. Such knowledge as the world has possessed hitherto has been closely veiled in mystery and secret orders; the veil is now being rent in twain, and the truth behind the veil is throwing off its shroud and revealing itself in all its native splendor.

Religion will not die; confidence in God, and trust in immortality will not decay; spiritualism has nothing to fear from any disclosures the pyramids and mounds of ancient days may make. The buried implements now being unearthed everywhere are no supports of a godless atheism or a soulless materialism; but they do refute, and that most sternly, the baseless conjectures of those who have no other basis for a cosmogony than a blind, narrow, perverted literalism founded on an obscure reading of the second chapter of Genesis.

The Hadaama were a red race; the name Adam, as all etymologists well know, means red man. There were doubtless five original races of man; each race originated separately; the Adamites were one of these races; they were the red men; the red men were the Atlanteans. Atlantis was the original garden of Eden; the North American Indians are Adam's degenerate sons and daughters.

You will please remember throughout this course of lectures that we are not saying a word against the spiritual sense of the Bible, nor indeed of any of the sacred books of the earth; we are dealing with external facts,

mainly, in these particular discourses, and, therefore, whenever we have occasion to refer to any bible, we shall be obliged to use what the Swedenborgians would call "the natural sense of the word." There is a spiritual meaning in all bibles, and in all true poetry, but they have also their historical, legendary and traditional sides. We said last Sunday that Noah's ark was no doubt an Atlantean vessel described by an inland people; we add to that remark this evening that the providential deliverance of Noah and his family no doubt was a historical reminiscence of the salvation of a small remnant of the inhabitants of Atlantis at the time of its final overthrow.

For about eight thousand years, Atlantis must have remained at the very summit of its glory; then, slowly declining, the people began to deteriorate through the admixture of foreign elements into their blood, and the worship of mammon, which eventually prevailed among them. Noah, preaching to the people and telling them to be warned in time of the fearful doom about to overtake them, represents an inspired prophet who is moreover an eminent astronomer and naturalist, foretelling the inevitable doom of the island and its inhabitants. The land must inevitably sink; its submergence may be regarded as a fixed certainty. During preliminary periods of the world's growth, there have been many fearful catastrophes resulting in the utter destruction of many lands; but this work of nature, solemn, fearful and awe-inspiring though it is, may, in the light of science, prove clearly a blessing in disguise; for these periodic submergences and uprisings of terra firma in the light of geology, can be regarded only as means for the perfect development and culture of the whole earth. But though the land must sink and its buildings perish, those of its inhabitants who are sufficiently advanced in knowledge to foresee the coming ruin may themselves avoid it. For example, if in the modern world a sagacious man or one highly inspired should foresee the approaching destruc-

tion of this very city, he might have no power to ward off the event ; yet his warning and counsels, if heeded, might surely be the means of protecting those who followed the guidance of higher wisdom than their own.

So far as we are able to compute the duration of spiritual and terrestrial cycles, we have discovered that they last for an appointed time, just as the seasons of the earthly year follow each other in regular order through all successive generations. There is always a longest and a shortest day in every year. Spring follows Winter ; Summer, Spring ; and Autumn, Summer. We know by precise calculations exactly how long a year lasts, and we make provision, and so do animals, instinctively against inclement seasons. We cannot order heat and cold, summer and winter, to come and go at our bidding ; but we can protect ourselves against the severities of a storm or remove to other localities where the storms will not reach us. Is it at all incredible that among the wise men of the ancient world, there were those who, aided by the dual light of observation and inspiration, could foretell even the day on which some great national and almost universal upheaval would take place, disturbing the accustomed order of all things and with sudden precipitancy hurling an entire country into the depths of ruin and night ? The wise men led by the star mentioned in the gospels, were doubtless none other than Persian Magi or Chaldean chiefs belonging to orders who had for thousands of years devoted almost their whole time and attention to gazing upon the heavens and discovering, from the movements of suns and stars, the beginning and ending of the cycles of the ages. Whensoever a certain star or comet appeared at a certain point in the heavens, they knew the fulness of time had come for a great event to occur on earth.

Astrology was not, among the learned of old, the vulgar and mischeivous fortune-telling and black magic which usurped its throne during the darkness of mediæval ages ; neither was ancient astrology what many

modern pretenders to the wisdom of the ancients strive to make it appear ; that man is bound by the iron decrees of fate ; that he cannot, by so much as the weight of a feather, lift the burden of destiny which astral influences impose upon him. True prophecy, whether it be delivered astrologically or otherwise, is never a pronouncement of predetermined doom ; were it so, it would not only be useless and of no possible practical value, it would be positively harmful, causing the present to be embittered with a foreshadowing of evil most certain to accrue in the future.

We think every intelligent student of the occult sciences will admit that, if his researches never enable him to go beyond the prediction of doom, thereby rendering no one any assistance to escape, time and strength are thrown away in prying into the mysterious book of fate even though it were written in starry characters. All true prediction is salutary, as it enables those who hear the words of the prophet, either to escape from it or prepare to meet it. In the lower kingdoms of nature we find instinct more potent than reason in helping intelligent creatures to prepare for things to come. We use the words instinct and reason as they are commonly used in the schools ; for ourselves we are not prepared to deny reason and reflection to the lower animals. The beaver usually knows how high the waters of the river are about to rise when man does not ; as this sagacious creature builds its hut higher on the banks some seasons than others, and invariably it comes to pass that the beaver has foretold the future accurately. The bees make their cells thicker some seasons than others, and those who have kept bees have always found that the bee was correct, when by the thickness of its cell, it predicted an unusually cold winter, or by its thinness, a mild one. Swallows fly southward earlier some seasons than others in obedience to a power which man can only compare to what he terms intuition in himself, or a very highly cultured reason transcending ordinary reason.

Prophets in every age have been of two classes and

oftentimes of one class made up of two ; mediums, persons responding instinctively to knowledge imparted to them from a world unapproachable by sense, and learned persons who have devoted their lives to interrogating nature and wresting from her those secrets which the unreflecting mind little thinks she has kept treasured in her bosom. The words of Genesis, "they ate, they drank, they married and were given in marriage," utterly ignoring the impending doom when the flood came and swept away all save eight persons, eight only having attended to the preaching of the prophet, remind us forcibly of the scenes which must have been enacted in Herculaneum and Pompeii when Vesuvius spent its rage upon those suddenly desolated cities, while crowds were in the streets buying and selling, feasting in banquet halls, and seated in the theater. Only the few are warned or can accept the warning, these are saved ; the rest are carried out on the wings of the flood to other abodes in space to enter upon scenes of new activities. Doubtless there is a law governing in this mystery just as there is in the erratic movements of a comet ; but it is ; law unknown to the majority, and therefore when it applies,—

" God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform ;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

But we must not end with this quotation ; we must follow the fact a step further and unite with the j Cowper in singing—

" Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercies and will break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace ;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain ;
God is his own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Though an old orthodox hymn, written by a poet who knew little or nothing of the marvelous events we are discussing this evening, for loftiness and purity of sentiment, coupled with absolute truthfulness to spiritual interpretation, nothing can excel these words.

Science and religion are one ; they walk together hand in hand, attesting the goodness of the Eternal ; both vouching for the supremacy of goodness in the universe. The natural sciences are the text-books of a sound theodicy, for while they can never be made to perfectly bolster up or permanently sustain the alleged facts of a spurious theology, they all proclaim, as with the blast of a silver trumpet, that no event in nature, however dark it may appear, is other than a herald of goodness and a star of promise pointing to some great blessing yet unexplained or unrevealed. In pondering over the ruins of the ancient world, travelling up and down through Yucatan, Peru, Mexico, and various parts of the United States in the Western Hemisphere, and then crossing the Pacific Ocean on the one hand, making our way through Japan and China into India, or sailing round among the islands of the Eastern Archipelago and finding vestiges of dead and gone glory everywhere, or reaching the eastern world by another route, crossing the Atlantic and sailing down to Egypt, or travelling through Europe till we come to Greece and Rome, and finding everywhere alike traces innumerable of the ruins and decay of once great and magnificent empires and republics, the world a charnel house beneath our feet, the sun by day, the moon and stars by night, shining down apparently unconcerned upon the ruins of a thousand generations ; he who feels no thrill of certainty when questioned concerning the purpose of life and human immortality may well feel saddened almost to despair ; are we living for nothing, are we born only to die, are we destined collectively as well as individually to build only for the worm and the rust to destroy our work ? Were there no answers to these awfully important questions from the spheres of immortality,

were there no voices speaking to our hearts and telling us we are immortal, we might well proclaim the uselessness, the utter vanity and misery of life, and seek annihilation. Even unselfish devotion to the good of others could not satisfy us, as those for whom we toil are with ourselves destined all alike to perish if this world be not simply a preparatory school and our education here initial to our promotion to higher universities and spheres of labor in a universe unbounded by the limitations of time and sense. We give it as our conception of the rise and fall of nations that each distinct race of men manifests a sphere, a fraternity of spirits; the race continuing until all the spirits belonging to that association have gained the discipline they need on earth; then, with the withdrawal of intelligence from that portion of the earth elsewhere, the land becomes a prey to the waters, or, losing its fertility, is abandoned by human beings.

You can readily perceive how this theory accounts for the loss and recovery of territory at seemingly stated intervals, and how readily such a proposition can be reconciled with the oft-reiterated statement that retrogression is impossible; we all progress, we are passing on to higher stages of attainment. A school-house or a workshop may have existed as a necessity to the training of many children and young persons; the time may come when those who have needed these establishments need them no longer, the population of the district may move away and the schools and workrooms soon fall into decay. We are not to infer from this that the people do not live and thrive elsewhere who once were studying and laboring in those once active but now desolate haunts. The life of man does not cease when he removes to another country, neither have those institutions been a failure which are not fitted to survive forever. Nothing is lost, no toil is useless, no effort fruitless; and were the eyes of all who listen to our words or read *the printed page* open to the realities of life immortal,

they would see even here and now the ancient dwellers on the American prairies, the inhabitants of prehistoric California and prehistoric Canada, clasping hands across this mighty continent and linking their arms in the embrace of true brotherhood with those who, in the far south and the far orient also, once formed a mighty continent of harmony and civilization.

The North American Indian is no friend to traditional Christian superstitions. He is a "heathen," an idolater, and therefore not a reliable witness; he must moreover be kicked and cuffed by a nominally Christian government, which, however, worships mammon almost entirely with a little spice of Christianity occasionally thrown in. The red man of the prairies need never have been the degenerate creature he is to-day, if, two hundred and fifty years ago, he had been handled as the gospel would command. His savagery and low cunning have been enormously developed by the cruelties and deception practiced upon him, as upon all aborigines yet discovered in rediscovered countries, after long years of degeneracy. Almost anything can be done with him by kindness. We are glad indeed to find many Christians to-day coming forward and denouncing in unmeasured terms the atrocities practiced by those who have long professed to be guided by Christian principles. The negro is no more civilizable than the red man, though the red man of to-day is the well nigh decrepid descendant of the old Atlantean race. Strange it is that the portraits of the great and powerful warriors, and even divinities, emblazoned upon the most ancient entablatures of Egypt, represent the conquering race in Egypt to have been red, and more nearly resembling the North American Indians than any other people now extant. Pyramids were built by the once universally powerful red race.

Pyramids abound all over this continent as well as in Egypt, the only difference being that the Egyptian pyramids are higher and cover less ground than the American

pyramids, which are broader and lower, betokening a less perfect style of architecture.

Egypt certainly testifies to the highest culmination of an epoch which gave to America a large share in the world's prehistoric glory. Egypt was doubtless the favorite and most prosperous of all the Atlantic colonies. Egypt suddenly rose to unparalleled greatness, as all its ruins testify — being occupied by the Atlanteans whose most important colony it was, at a time when they were by far the greatest nation upon earth. Central America carries us back quite as far as Egypt, possibly farther; but as yet the archæologist has not quite so reliable data to build upon in America as in Egypt, though the American data are daily accumulating and improving in clearness and importance.

Setting aside the numerous traditions of the Indian tribes, and confining ourselves to incontestable stony evidence, we can come to no other conclusion than that the Mound Builders marked the termination of a long line of successive peoples of great culture; after whom slowly arose the period of the North American Indian, as he was found by the Icelanders in the days of Eric, and the Southern Europeans in the time of Columbus. The Mound Builders must have been a very numerous, industrious and influential people, as the mounds are to be counted by thousands upon thousands, even as far east as Ohio, and by a close comparison of them with the buildings recording the prevalence of the stone age in Europe, we find them to have attained a very high rank of excellence. Armories, temples, defensive works, and so forth, are to be met with in prolific abundance wherever the enterprising archæologist directs his gaze, testifying to the work of a people whose attainments, if they have been equalled, have certainly not been eclipsed by Europeans.

Were it not for the interest now centering in these remains, they would speedily disappear, as the vulgar eye sees nothing to admire in them, and the vulgar mind will

make no effort to save them from the vandalism of those who take no interest in matters of ancient history. But, thanks to the enterprise of the present day, these truly wonderful memorials of departed greatness are now beginning to receive a portion of the care and study they so richly deserve, and will so abundantly repay. These mounds give evidence that from a military point of view, these people were experts, and had to protect themselves by constant vigilance from the attacks of hostile neighbors. Their knowledge of engineering must have been very great, while their roadways are marvels of skill in construction. They must at length have receded before the face of some more powerful peoples, or, yielding to the ravages of time, have gone down through a series of natural cataclysms which, while saving the mounds, destroyed the builders.

Their religion, so far as it can be deciphered by a study of their art, was that which unmistakably preceded the traditional beliefs and customs of the Indians. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and in spirit communion; their worship was of the sun, as the symbol of divine light, and as the abode of the angelic powers who hold the destiny of earth in their keeping. Animal forms were also employed to express spiritual ideas, as was the case with all nations of antiquity.

When in the dawning light of a new era, the hieroglyphics of the past shall be fully deciphered, then will come the time when the eloquent stones will cry aloud and spare not; lifting up their voices with strength, they will testify to the homogeneity of mankind in the past, while in the future all races will blend in one new people. Then will all dwell together in peace and amity, and the child of intuition shall guide both lion and lamb in ways of pleasantness and paths of peace.

The invasion of California by the Chinese is one of the vital questions of to-day, how to deal with it is one of the pressing problems of social science, whatever may be the true solution of the difficulty. Whatever justification

the American laborer may have in complaining of Chinese cheap labor, the question of compensation to be paid to laborers, the fixing of minimum wages, for instance, must be left to political economy, but setting aside these issues which though very important are only side issues, no one who carefully and dispassionately studies the American Constitution and believes in the rights of man, can logically or fairly deny to the Chinaman any liberties granted to Irishmen, Germans, or any others who cross the Atlantic instead of the Pacific to reach American shores. There seems to be in the minds of the American people, a deeply rooted conviction that Asiatics should not be allowed the same rights in this country as Europeans. This arises probably from two conspicuous causes, to say nothing of others not so prominent. In the first place, the Pilgrim forefathers came from Europe; America was discovered by Europeans in the fifteenth century; and in the second place, Europeans profess the Christian religion and Asiatics do not. These two reasons can generally be assigned truthfully for the otherwise almost unaccountable prejudice of the Orient against the Occident. If the Theosophists have done no other good than to assist the Orientals to popularize their literature in the west, their service to humanity will have been sufficiently great to entitle them to a large share of respect among all who wish to see justice done to all sides of every question, and the narrow, one-sided ideas of the bulk of Christendom displaced by broad and intelligent views of the unity of man and the kinship of religions.

Time undoubtedly was when Asia and America were connected at Behrings Straits, or rather by fertile lands now submerged, and whose submergence formed these straits. When the two hemispheres were thus connected, the north pole could not have been just where it now is: it must have been many degrees farther north, thereby bringing the northern parts of this continent nearer to the equator. Whenever Greenland was in fact a green land, there were races of men inhabiting Canada and all

the northern parts of North America who were connected with the most ancient Asiatic peoples. The Mound Builders seem to have formed a bridge over the entire North American continent; their wonderful relics, many of which are now in an excellent state of preservation, mark a long succession of periods during which, on account of the increasing cold of the Canadian territory, these industrious and highly cultured people made their way gradually southwards through the state of Ohio to the Mississippi, while doubtless from quite another quarter of the globe, populations arrived, establishing themselves in the central American regions and the northern parts of South America, thereby forming a line of marvelous achievements pointing to this movement in directly opposite directions.

Many Archæologists, unfamiliar with the Canada mounds, trace the Mound Builders up from the South; others who have seen the Canadian relics trace them from the north.

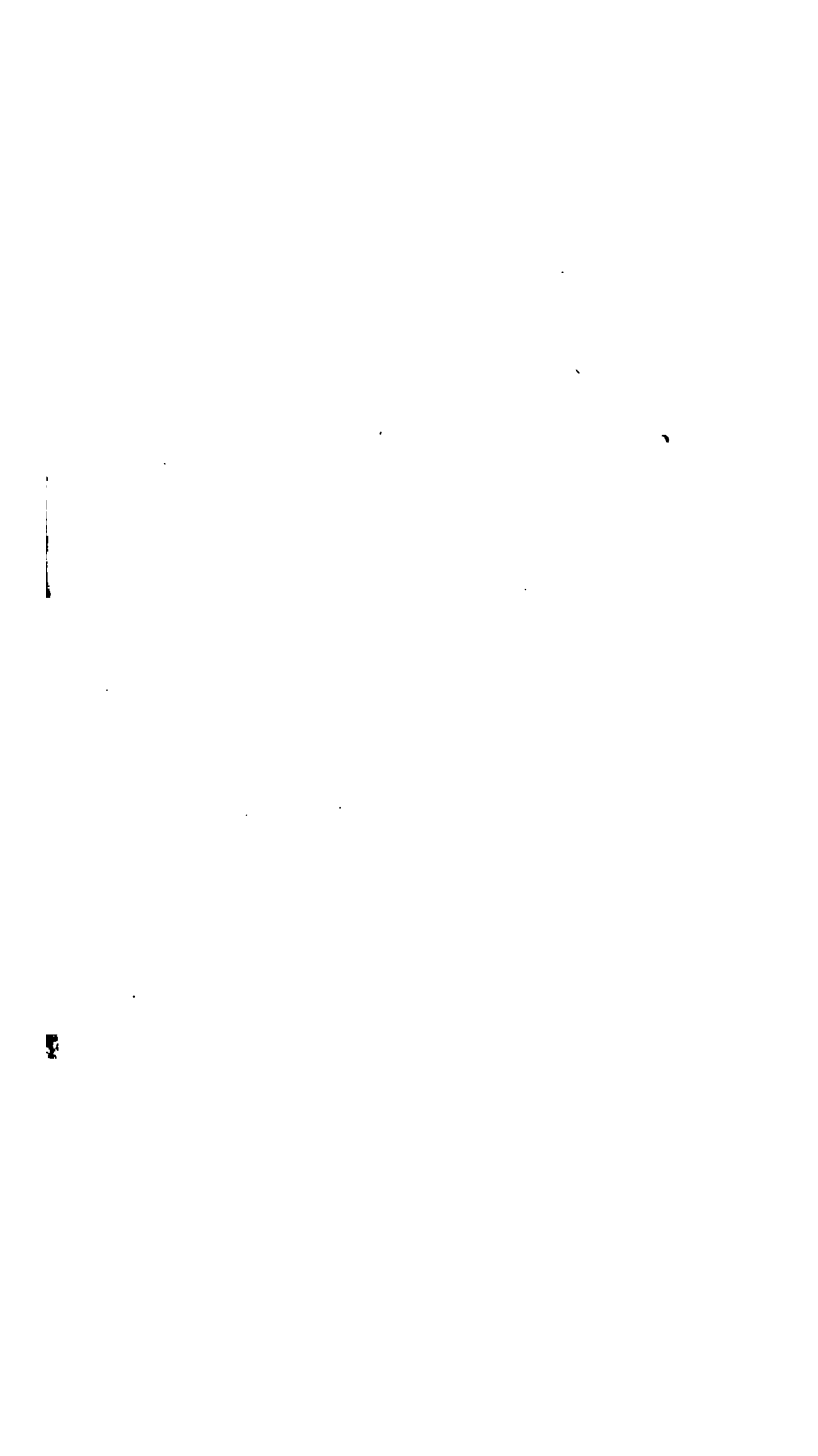
There can be no doubt whatsoever, from our standpoint, that the whole of America has been many times peopled and many times submerged; its periodic inundations, one of which doubtless occurred within the traditions of Europeans in the days of Columbus, led to the horror and dread which the sailors felt when urged to navigate the Atlantic. All natural catastrophes were attributed by Greeks and Romans to the action of ill-disposed deities who were permitted to destroy man when Zeus or Jupiter was offended with the inhabitants of a certain clime; Christianity borrowed this idea and, coupling with it the old Testament theory of the wrath of Jehovah, outpoured in the destruction of a guilty land as well as its inhabitants, soon originated some superstitions and preserved others which, while they afforded no satisfactory information concerning the ancient world, at least preserved a lurid memory of some ancient events far better known to the philosophers, and which gradually dimmed, in the dark ages when ignorance settled down

upon Europe and quenched, as far as it could be quenched, the ever-burning light of historical truth.

Men held their peace for centuries concerning the ancient world; they gradually grew into the belief that there had never been any ancient world at all, save the narrow territories defined in the Jewish Bible. The Jewish historians naturally wrote of certain countries only in plain language, contenting themselves with vague hints about the rest of the world, while they chronicled wars, defeats, and triumphs of the Israelites. It is natural enough for a historical specialist to confine his record within certain boundaries; but the ignorant assumption that nothing had any existence beyond what was mentioned in the Mosaic text, was of course utterly condemned in every really enlightened circle.

The more we study the history of Christianity in Europe, the more convinced are we that many of its emblems and veiled allegories, as manipulated by a self-seeking and dominant hierarchy, were intended to hide truth far more than to reveal it. Secrecy in Masonry, in Rosicrucianism, and every form of mysticism, became essential rather as a means of protecting the learned, than because the light of truth has to be hid under a bushel, or else it goes out, like the ever-burning lamps discovered in subterranean temples, which the air extinguishes immediately it approaches them. Mystery and secrecy have been the grave-clothes of knowledge while it lay buried in a trance fearing to stir lest a fanatic attempt should be made upon its life. We are now happily outgrowing the fear which has so long possessed the world, that it is profane and impious to draw aside the veil and gaze on what has been obscured for ages. Our answer to all who say that we may be tempting God and drawing down upon us the vengeance of heaven if we attempt to raise life's curtain of mystery and peer beyond, is that if the Eternal wished us to remain in ignorance, he would never have given us the power and desire to ascertain facts. If we had only one talent, as we could not possibly use more than one while possessing

only one, we might safely conclude that, in our present position, heaven decreed that we should remain in ignorance of all that could not be attained by the fullest and most faithful use of our single capacity; but who shall dare to say that, when endowed with many, we are to use only one or two or three as churchmen may dictate. Religion has everything to gain, though spurious theology, mere ignorant pretence, sciolism, masquerading as science, has everything to lose by a free and honest search into the mysteries of the far past of humanity; for none who read the records written upon the stones, none who heed the voices of the stones when they cry out though man remain silent, can fail to behold a glorious panorama passing before his mental vision, a series of magnificent dissolving views, each one portraying some special achievement of prehistoric man, and altogether affirming the sublime truth that God has never left himself without a witness: but that the so-called Pagan world has been as full of spiritual knowledge and, in many instances fuller of clearer knowledge, than Christendom has allowed to shine within its borders. Ecclesiastical despotism has done more than anything else to put knowledge under the ban and prevent man from inquiring into his origin and progress, without let or hindrance. Destroy the scarecrows which priestcraft has set up at the entrance to the prolific cornfield of universal knowledge, break down the fences or at least climb over them, tear down the notice, "Trespassers will be prosecuted," assert your right to hunt without being guilty of poaching on the church's just preserves, and having violated every ecclesiastical game law, you can commence in good earnest your search for truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth regarding the ancient history of man. With the beam of Christian prejudice in your eye, you will never see clearly into the attainments of pre-Christian and non-Christian peoples, but, as a seeker after universal religion, you will find no study so fascinating and none yielding so prolific a harvest of encouraging results as the study of the world before its supposed *creation, six thousand years ago.*





THE WONDERS OF EGYPT.

The Great Pyramid, Sphinx, and Other Marvels of the Ancient World.

The land of Egypt has been for the past few years a subject of peculiar interest and concern to politicians, and, indeed, to all readers of newspapers, owing to its present embroiled and enfeebled condition, especially with reference to the interference of England in its affairs. In such a discourse as that of this evening, it would be quite beside our purpose to criticise Mr. Gladstone's cabinet, or the general action of the English Parliament, in dealing with Egyptian affairs; we will, however, state that, right or wrong, criticisable or uncriticisable, the present English interference is a striking fulfilment of ancient prophecies, engraven on solid stony monuments, which have bade such defiance to time as to be at this moment, after thousands of years of duration, in so good a state of preservation that it needs only an adequate knowledge of antique masonry and hieroglyphics to decipher the history of the past and prophecy of the future, clearly written upon them in symbolic language, employing objects in material nature as correspondences to spiritual and national events. In the case of the most majestic and important of them all, neither hieroglyphic or inscription of any kind is employed to convey fact or prophecy, the actual proportions of a structure embodying mathematically and geometrically in exact figures and mode of construction the truths recorded or predicted. Egypt is unquestionably the most ancient centre of civilization to which

modern civilization can be traced, though India is almost contemporaneous, while China boasts an almost incredible antiquity ; and it is to Egypt, rather than to Central America, or to Atlantis even, that we may look for the flowering out of ancient knowledge during periods of such culminations as marked great eras in history.

Egypt was the centre of government and influence—Egypt being to prehistoric culture what the British Empire has long been to the eastern hemisphere, and what the United States are now to the western world ; many statements concerning pre-biblical times, long regarded as mythical or fabulous, are now verifiable by reference to exact history ; not indeed to that history of which Herodotus is the founder, nor to such written languages as those which are ultimately traceable to Cadmus or Adam Kadmon, with whom they are said by many to have originated, but to that history which is engraven on tablets so ancient that all modern conjectures concerning their dates utterly fail to even approximate toward a correct measurement of the time which has passed since their erection. It is more especially to two, than to the bulk of these monuments, that we shall call your attention on this occasion, leaving for future lectures a consideration of those of minor importance and of more recent date. The central monument upon the earth is the grand pyramid at Gizeh, commonly called the pyramid of Cheops, because once it was almost universally believed that it was erected in the days of Cheops, or that that monarch gave the land upon which it stands. This pyramid, though in the neighborhood of many others, is entirely unlike all its companions, save in outward appearance. Outwardly, all are very similar, the great pyramid being outwardly distinguishable from the rest only by its superior size ; but, when an entrance has been effected, the likeness vanishes, and this one pyramid stands alone as the past grand masonic lodge of the earth,—the seat and centre of that supreme knowledge of

earth and heaven, of the numberless worlds in space, and of the relation of each to each and each to all, that has given to the very name of Egypt an unparalleled significance in the scientific world.

In our next lecture, which will be on prehistoric Egypt, we shall lay before you some conclusions as to Egypt's condition and place among the nations prior to the culmination of that grand cycle of time which culminated, according to Solon and Plato, more than 9000 years before their day. The time when the submergence of Atlantis took place, when the subsidence of land in the southern, and the disappearance of water in the northern hemisphere marked a distinct and decisive era in the history of the world at large.

This lecture will take up the question of the pyramid, not so much with reference to its extremely remote antiquity, as with regard to that now computed age which carries the student back along lines of direct science and history to 2170 B.C., the date fixed as the time of its erection by Professor Smythe and other astronomers, several years ago; there is ample evidence that the pyramid was then in existence; there is evidence, also, that that year was a notable one in the history of the earth, and was, doubtless, the special year alluded to, biblically, when the flood in the days of Noah subsided, and the earth was regenerated and peopled in those parts known to the authors of the Pentateuch; or, if other sections of territory were known to them besides those mentioned in Scripture, it must be remembered that the Hebrew records only deal with the antecedents and national life of Israel, treating of other races incidentally, and only so far as their history impinges upon that of the descendants of Abraham. 2170 B.C. was a year of perihelion, the year of the fulfilment of many ancient prophecies,—a year when the old order of things had manifestly succumbed to a new,—a year when ancient dynasties had fallen, never to rise again,—a year most memorable, not only

to Egypt, but to all the inhabitants of the then civilized earth especially, and in some degree to mankind in general. Alpha Draconis, as you are doubtless aware, was then the polar star, and will not be again till more than 20,000 years hence, as it requires the accomplishment of the grand cycle or precession of the equinoxes to bring about a return of the astral phenomena coincident to a special period in the history of the universe.

The great pyramid has, doubtless, stood between 20,000 and 30,000 years, and has been submerged in times of great and general deluge; but the record of its prehistoric career is entombed in such chambers, galleries and vaults as have not yet been explored, but mention of which is made in occult literature; to those who can understand the references, these discoveries, made by the ancients, and familiar to the highest adepts of the Orient, will become public, ere long, with the further advance of scientific exploration. Whatsoever is discovered externally by scientific processes has been first announced by spiritual revelation, science always disclosing, analyzing and expounding, in external ways, truths long before familiar to the spiritual teachers of the world. Once in a while, some teacher, braver than the rest, would dare to rend the veil of Isis, and give the populace a glimpse of the mysteries which lay behind, but the penalty of such bravery was often death, and always bitter persecution. The utter unreadiness on the part of mankind at large to receive occult knowledge without the veil of mysticism, lay at the root of all the Masonic institutions of the world. Every lodge of Masons or of Odd Fellows, to-day, possesses some secret carefully shrouded from the world, on the plea that the world is not ready to know what the initiated hold in their grasp, while in ancient days secrecy was enjoined on the members of such orders as a safeguard, and a very necessary one in times of turbulence and danger. The tone of secrecy to-day is largely sentimental, often

morbid, and frequently the result of an inordinate love of power. Secret societies are often dangerous to the safety of a nation when they have a political reason for existence, but the hermetic lodges, theosophical societies, and indeed, all modern Masonic lodges, have another and totally different mission than that of political fraternities. Under the veil of secrecy in all ages, literature and art have flourished, science and philosophy have been fledged; when the birds fledged in shells break their shells, it is merely a sign that their incubatory discipline is at an end; incubation cannot always continue; shells cannot always be needed. To remain in a shell when we are ready to walk and fly is an absurdity; to abuse the shell which developed your infant life is absurd and ungrateful also. Convents and monasteries, as well as all the mysterious crypts and underground temples of the world, have done a work of mingled good and evil; they have been useful and useless at the same time, according as the discipline was one of training or of idleness; and, indeed, when arts and learning entered not into the cloister, a life of meditation, of prayer, and of absorption of the mind in spiritual pursuits, developed not only psychological power in those who thus fixed their minds upon a given object, and devoted themselves entirely to a definite, intense work, but these bands of self-imprisoned victims to a dominant idea have, by their concentration of thought and development of will-force, acquired the power to leave and re-enter their bodies at will, making themselves manifest to sense, and then again invisible to the eye, as we are told Jesus did after his crucifixion, and, as the legends of the East inform us, the wonder workers of Hindostan and other ancient mystic climes have, for ages, been able to do.

The secret orders of the world, as generally known to mankind, are very inferior connections of those grand and august lodges, of which the highest of all is the Order of Melchisedec; this Order, so ancient that its

birthday is lost in the unfathomable depths of a soundless antiquity, was certainly known to Abraham, the progenitor of the House of Israel; the Order of Aaron and that of Melchisedec are mentioned both in the Old and New Testaments as entirely distinct, but not as in opposition to each other. The great difference between them was, that one was temporal, the other eternal; that of Melchisedec, like its founder, had neither beginning of life nor end of days, while the other was related to outward customs and observances, both religious and civil. The Order of Melchisedec was known to David, as he mentions it in the Psalms. The 110th Psalm is usually considered prophetic of the Messiah, the words "thou art a priest forever after the Order of Melchisedec," are said by all orthodox Christians to refer to Jesus Christ, while orthodox Jews regard them as typical of the unending reign of a Messiah who is yet to come. But who was Melchisedec, and what is his order? are questions asked again and again by scholars and their pupils alike. The ordinary commentaries on the Bible have no more satisfactorily explained Melchisedec than they have the Apocalypse, and there is indeed no satisfactory solution of the mystery of this most mysterious order, other than that familiar to those so far acquainted with Oriental antiquities and occult literature that they possess a clue, yea, the very key to the origin of religions and masonry on earth, and who, therefore, know what the designer of the great pyramid evidently knew,—the unchanging character of divine natural law, and the real nature of man and of the earth which he inhabits. The grand pyramid is, evidently, a temple of science, philosophy, religion and art; it is fourfold, and yet is a perfect unity; founded on the absolute square, it stands upon the broad and eternal basis of uncompromising justice, of unalterable truth. The four sides of the square signify universal brotherhood, and eventually, the universal dissemination of truth, and teach that while the edifice

standing on that particular square is necessarily limited in size and influence, it stands as a monument to the ultimate overthrow of all that stands between man and man, nation and nation, soul and soul. There were four great sciences known to the ancients upon which they based all their calculations, and in accordance with which they reared their temples, arranged their ceremonies, and predicted the future: these were Astronomy, Astrology, Mathematics and Geometry; three only of these four are allowed to be real sciences by most of the professed savans of the present day, astrology having fallen into disrepute and been long characterized as a delusion, largely on account of the baseless superstitions and degrading follies which have been mixed up with it; but these parasites, this fungus, the noxious growth of mediæval darkness, has no more to do with astrology, pure and simple, than the absurdities of the errors set aside by modern astronomers are part and parcel of genuine astronomy. We protest against the sciolism that denies or overlooks a true science because that science has been surrounded with accretions as foreign to itself as barnacles are to a rock, whitewash to a fresco; or parasites to a tree they endeavor to destroy. Destroy the parasites! Remove the barnacles! Clean off the whitewash! and do your work thoroughly, ye who delight in making a clean sweep of error. There is ample room for the radical; the iconoclast need not stay his hand, but beware lest in the name of truth, you strive to remove much that may be true, but is not manifestly such to you, because you have not grown to comprehend it. Every error can be demolished by a self-evident truth, but in no other way. We know that two and two are not five, because we know they are four; but, were we in ignorance of their being four, we might imagine they were three, and therefore be as ignorant and faulty in our conclusions as those whose belief that they were five we were assailing. The ignorance of the day, which pretends to be science,

would be amusing were it not so humiliating. All endeavors to explain the true meaning of anything are met with sarcastic contempt, or vulgar ridicule, by those who ought to be the first to carefully examine whatever is brought before them. However, the resistless power of truth is such that, though opposed a million times, it suffers nothing from attacks, but, though seemingly destroyed in one place, it reappears with redoubled energy elsewhere, only to win new converts with each resurrection after a seeming defeat, to draw around its standard millions, who, were it not for opposition, would never have had their attention called to its existence. The much abused and shamefully misrepresented science of astrology covers ground unbounded by astronomy. It is really the spiritual or esoteric side of astronomy. Astronomy may tell you how far one world is from another; it may compute the length of time required for a world to complete a revolution around the centre of a system to which it belongs; it may even tell you of myriad suns in space; but astrology tells you of the mutual relations of worlds, of their affinities for each other, of the attractive and repellant forces they are constantly generating, and exerting one upon another, the basis of astrology being the fact that there is no absolute void or vacuum anywhere in nature; that all space is filled with what, for want of a better or more lucid term, we will call ether. This ether is but the outermost expression of life, and life is spirit travelling from star to star, interstellar space is filled with the homes of spirits. Whatever affects one world in a system, affects all; yea, whatever affects one system of worlds, affects all worlds in all universes; all are but parts of one majestic whole; all worlds are but members of one tremendous body whose measure is known only to the Infinite. All worlds are either inhabited, or if not now inhabited have passed the inhabitable stage in their career, or are in their infancy, prior to their fruit-bearing season. The move-

ments of all the planets affect the life on each and all, therefore, the past few years—years when several planets have made their perihelion passages almost simultaneously—have been years of great commotion, energy and strife. Not only the predictions, made by instruments of the spirit world, in this country and elsewhere, a few years ago, have been literally fulfilled in the manifest effects of the perihelion, but predictions made in solid stone when the great pyramid was built, have been fulfilled with such startling accuracy, that none, save those who blindly shut their eyes to facts, and are held in the unyielding vice of senseless prejudice, can hold other than one of the only two logical and defensible explanations of these prophecies and their fulfillments which have yet been offered to the world. One of these theories is restrictive, and teaches the arbitrariness of God's revelation to man; that view (the orthodox) is taken by Professor Piazza Smyth, astronomer royal of Scotland, who says in his marvelous book, entitled "Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid," that God must have directly inspired the founder of the pyramid, as its site could not possibly have been chosen accidentally, while its interior construction is so marvelous that none but a prophet of the Most High, acting under His instruction, could possibly have brought it into existence. This theory, though plausible in some ears, is utterly unnecessary to account for the pyramid to those who are in any degree acquainted with the true nature of the far-famed wisdom of the ancients, or who understand anything of the true relation to knowledge of the secret orders of the earth, at the head of which stands that sublimest and most ancient Order of Melchisedec. This order is altogether spiritual, and exists in the spiritual world, though it is represented on the earth by a lodge whose members are the mediums of the twelve angels who form it in spirit: as angelic life is dual, the members of this order are twenty-four in number, twelve males and twelve females always constituting it.

Masonic orders, which exclude women, are untrue to the most ancient Masonic Orders of the world, and so far as masculine monopoly has tyrannized over the rights of the female sex, masonry has degenerated, but the most ancient mysteries of the world are hidden under the veil of ceremonial mystery in the highest lodges. The majority of modern masons ignore magic, and know little, if anything, of the true spiritual significance of the ceremonies performed at their meetings. Many persons regard the external and ornamental lodges as sufficient, because they confer similar and superior advantages to those obtainable from benefit and burial societies. In its lowest form and most external interpretation, Masonry has a certain value; its principles are moral and its general influence good; but the fashionable Masonry of to-day is in no way to be compared with the occult brotherhoods of the East, where not only three, but nine degrees of initiation are necessary to install one into office; only three degrees can be taken in Europe or America; the remaining six must be taken in the East,—so say the theosophists of to-day, though beyond that theosophy which is dependent on ceremony and organization, the genuine theosophy of all times towers as a mountain above a hillock. Theosophical and hermetic societies, which establish lodges all over the modern world, are valuable as educators of the populace, whom they introduce to the first principles of occult science; external means of initiation, prayer, fasting, ablutions, etc., serve a useful end, but they do not constitute that spiritual training which is independent of all outward tutelage. Certain psychological and physiological changes may be wrought in many persons by outward means, but manufactured mediums or tutored adepts are never the equals of natural born and spiritually developed sensitives. Mediumship and psychological power are to-day manifesting themselves more powerfully outside than inside of cliques and organizations, which may develop many

priests, but few or any prophets. Prophets are natural inspired seers, who hold communion with the spiritual world directly without the aid of fumigations or ritual of any kind ; they are taken by spirit power in childhood or adult age without any outward preparation ; their inward understandings are opened ; they are divinely illumined as was Swedenborg, who is the best modern representative of an ancient prophet known to popular literature ; but as the West, during the present cycle, has not yet received so powerful a wave of spiritual enlightenment as laved the shores of Egypt, India, and other eastern lands some thousands of years ago, the time even yet having scarcely come for America to return to its antediluvian attainments in spiritual and scientific directions,—attainments unparalleled or certainly unsurpassed even in the mystic East in the days of its palmiest splendor, as Central American remains abundantly testify,—we have yet occasion to look back as well as forward for accurate knowledge of weights and measures, the precession of the equinoxes, and other mathematical and astronomical truths with which the ancient world, in the persons of its most enlightened sons and daughters, was thoroughly familiar. Egypt was for many centuries the most enlightened of all the nations of the earth, and there stands the miracle in stone bearing testimony to the future events now fulfilled, in the perfect accuracy of its measurement of the duration of astronomical and spiritual cycles, one of which is just now completed. The external aspect of the pyramid is no longer beautiful to look upon, though it is grandly imposing, and being fully 480 feet in height, is one of the loftiest buildings in the world, the spires of the highest cathedrals being only a few feet higher. Formerly the pyramid was covered with casing-stones of exquisite beauty, of pure white marble or granite, which once abounded in the district. These casing-stones have, however, been removed, and now form the principal attraction of a magnificent Mahomedan mosque.

The Mussulmans, under whom the Alexandrian library was burned, did almost all that could be done to spoliage Egypt, knowing that the monuments of antiquity threw light upon ancient history and religion, liable to interfere with the supremacy of themselves and the faith of Islam. Architecturally considered, the great pyramid is a thoroughly unique edifice ; it has no rival on the earth, unless it be among undiscovered glories of Central America, where excavations have not yet been far enough conducted to justify scholars in assuming what is or what is not concealed beneath the ancient debris abounding all over that extensive and long neglected country. The composition of the pyramid is of concrete ; it was undoubtedly formed gradually on the spot out of raw materials, welded into a homogeneous substance by skillful workmen, the equals of whom we know not where to seek amid the haunts of modern culture. The workmen, though possibly captives, were under the supervision of the most enlightened savans of the earth, and these were the members of that most sacred and secret order which never manifests its existence with relation to external affairs, except at special times and for purposes of peculiar and unusual importance. Notwithstanding the concrete nature of the building, hydraulics must have been at an amazing pitch of perfection, or the pile could never have been raised, the casing-stones requiring an immense amount of hydraulic power to lift them to their places, the feat accomplished in the building of that unequalled fane transcending altogether the highest attempts of the best modern workman. Externally the pyramid presents the appearance of a succession of steps, broad at the base and narrow at the summit, culminating in an apex pointing directly to Alcyone, the centre of the Pleiades, that central and glorious sun around which this solar system revolves once in every grand cycle of over 25,800 years. Not only did the builders of the pyramid know of the precession of the equinoxes, they had also calcu-

lated the mean distance of the earth from the sun. At perihelion, the earth, as you are doubtless aware, is about 3,000,000 miles nearer the sun than at aphelion, and this fact, coupled with that of the necessity for employing instruments of the finest construction, and an application to study almost impossible to ordinary minds to decide accurately the distance between the earth and the sun, accounts for the varying testimony of modern astronomers. The most eminent among French astronomers and mathematicians, who have given great attention to the pyramid,—greater than the savans of any other modern nation, have come almost to a perfect agreement that the mean distance is rather less than 92,000,000 miles. According to the nicest pyramidal calculations it is 91,840,000 miles, as nearly as can be estimated. The processes whereby the learned have arrived at the knowledge that the pyramid states this fact, would require a lengthy and laborious dissertation of so strictly scientific and technical a nature, as to be utterly out of place in this lecture, which is intended not specially for scholars or mathematicians. To those in our audience who desire scientific vindication or verification of our statements, we would advise a careful perusal of the works of Prof. Smyth, and other noted scholars; and though Prof. Smyth endeavors to bend everything to his distinctly orthodox ideas of Christianity, his scientific statements are by no means invalidated, as they certainly are not increased in value by his decidedly Christian proclivities and bias. It is his idea, and that of his colleagues, that the truthfulness of the Bible and the divinity of Christ's mission are attested to by the pyramid; but whether this massive structure teaches Christianity in the orthodox sense or not, its scientific and historic value is intrinsic, and utterly independent of the possibility of its being an apologist for any particular form of religion or interpretation of universal truth.

We must now very hurriedly proceed to give a few ad-

ditional facts concerning its interior construction before we summarize our statements, and give you our view of the true meaning of this magnificent symbol of the pathway of worlds and souls to perfection, for the pyramid is a problem and a parable. It illustrates spiritual laws and principles, it reveals eternal verities, and is a measure of earth and sky, it is moreover a record of the progress of every human spirit to celestial life, as well as of the unfoldment of the earth and its ultimate perfection through successive cycles or ages of time. The most notable features of the already discovered interior are the grand gallery, king's chamber, queen's chamber, chambers of construction, the entrance passage, and telescopic gallery, so called because it is in the form of a perfect telescope, proving that the pyramid was designed for astronomical as well as religious purposes. If monarchs have been buried within its walls, we must not forget that catacombs and churches have often done duty for each other, while St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, and other noted houses of worship are mausoleums, wherein lie entombed the bodies of distinguished persons who have rendered special service either to religion or their country.

For many centuries no entrance to the pyramid could be found; many unsuccessful attempts at entrance had been made under the auspices of the governments to which Egypt has been successively subject. The cupidity of the Mohammedans or their curiosity, however, prevailed, and Al Mamoun's workmen at length effected an entrance upon the north side, which conducted them into an ascending passage 60 feet above the base. We must reserve for another lecture a detailed description of the entrances and passages, and what they signify, taking you at once, this evening, to the grand gallery, which is 1881 1/2 inches in length, the number of inches evidently signifying the number of years in the astronomical cycle just completed. This gallery is connected with the

King's Chamber by a narrow passageway, representing a transitional period and time of general distress before the new era commences, which is signified by the King's Chamber, lofty, light, with perfectly modulated temperature, the best and most perfectly adapted to human needs. This chamber contains no other object to attract the human eye than a lidless sarcophagus unornamented by any inscription, but infinitely more eloquent as a type of the rending of the veil of Isis than any other emblem of universal enlightenment could possibly be. When the new era dawns, the universal spread of knowledge over at least all the civilized parts of the earth will enable the nations, everywhere, to practically, as well as theoretically, solve the problem of the pyramid, and interpret the riddle of the sphinx.

When the pyramid was built, the *illuminati*, the *literati* and the *inspirati*, (to use terms often employed to designate those who constituted the brotherhoods of knowledge upon the earth, in the days when the learned and the inspired were wont to unite their forces, that through effective combinations of power and influence, more might be accomplished than could possibly be executed by individual labors carried on by isolated persons), were not hunted or persecuted fraternities. Time was in Egypt, and all over Asia, when the countries were governed, tradition says, by the gods. The gods were the learned, also the genuine prophets and spirit mediums of antiquity, who ruled not by force of arms, or through any bloody conquest, but through the superior force of their intelligence, and the immense psychological and spiritual power they possessed and wielded, so long as they kept themselves pure and were true in all things to their sacred trust. No one can read the annals of history without being struck with the extraordinary parity existing between the legends of one country and another.*

*Note. For more extended information on this point the reader is referred to W. J. Colville's lectures on Atlantis and Prehistoric America.

Nations widely severed by land and sea, have all similar traditions of a brighter and more peaceful age which antedated the eras of conflict through which the toiling nations have not yet passed. The mythologies abound with stories of gods and goddesses, who once ruled the world in material form ; and there is a general plaint in history that the reign of just, wise, and merciful divinities is over, and that the world is now given over into the hands of the fates and furies.

There are two diametrically opposite accounts of human development, not only in the Bible but in all history. The one record tells of the rise, the other of the fall, of man ; the one walks hand in hand with the natural sciences, and declares that man was at first little more than an ape, both in manners, intellect and appearance ; that primeval man had no knowledge of other wants than those which animals know ; that he dwelt in rude caves and huts, and has through many thousands of years gradually emerged out of the thick darkness of barbarism, into the comparative noonday of his present civilization. This view of life accords with science ; it is healthful and optimistic in its tendencies. It tells us the world grows steadily better, that man is always improving, and that we may hope in the future to more than realize in actual fulfillment upon earth, the most exalted and romantic dream or vision of poet, seer, or prophet.

On the other hand, the world abounds with ruined cities, temples, and works of art which cannot be replaced to-day. The world is a sepulchre as well a cradle ; and wherever the travelling archæologist wends his industrious way, he finds traces in the Orient and Occident alike, of superb remains of centres of old-time civilization, eclipsing in the glory of their fruition, the loftiest and proudest attainment of England and America to-day. These two histories of man, indelibly written within the earth itself, must be read and explained together. Man is rising, man has deteriorated ; but all men are not of

one race, and all countries are not alike in winter or summer. The progress of mankind, and of the earth, is in circles or cycles, and these cycles are immense periods of time which are divided into spring, summer, autumn and winter. As in every natural year of 365 days and over, the flowers bloom and fade, the trees grow green and then bare again ; and as the world advances through the dark night season of winter, as well as through the noontide glories of the summer, so man on his way to perfect intellectual and physical maturity, draws nearer to the goal through alternating periods of sleep and wakefulness, of rest and work. And as all parts of the world have not their annual seasons, or their day and night at the same time, so is it with the earth, and with man as a whole. The cycle has its ascending and its descending waves of influence, with which to lave the world. There are seasons occurring periodically in the history of the earth when light strikes the world from spiritual as well as solar and astral sources so powerfully, that, admit or deny the explanation given by spiritual science, as you will, the results are undeniable. The earth responds like an *Æolian harp* to every breath of influence that blows upon it from the higher or the nether world. Arts and sciences, inventions and discoveries, multiply and excel on every hand, and it is just at such a time that crime, poverty, distress, anarchy, accident and disaster, coupled with epidemics of every kind, make their appearance, and threaten to counteract all the advantages and higher culture.

During the dark ages preceding the enlightenment, the earth has been in a slumbering, dormant state of intellectual and spiritual inactivity. When the world is raised from its slumber by the trumpet, in the shape of the powerful forces which, with the recurring cycle, play directly upon it, it arises weakened and sensitive ; weakened through the malpractices indulged in through the period of intellectual quiescence just brought to a close,

and peculiarly sensitive through the unusual amount of pressure brought to bear upon it, with the return of a special wave of influence from the sun, and other planets. At such critical junctures in the earth's history, remarkable planetary conjunctions are discovered by astronomers, and deny it as any skeptic will, the fact that at such times the condition of the earth is in all things extraordinary, awaits an explanation given satisfactorily by none others than they who attribute to the rightful cause of solar, interplanetary and spiritual action, the present disturbances. Did time permit, we might pursue this theme indefinitely, and show you how, in an especial sense, at the present moment, the unsettled weather, the peculiar light before the sunrise, and after sunset, which has recently perplexed astronomers so much, the numerous earthquakes, eruptions, storms, accidents, wars, rebellions, sickness, etc., etc., are all results of the present position of four large planets. We might also point out to you how through several of the most prominent instruments of the modern spiritual revelation, all these events were foretold before 1880, and you were led to expect between that year and 1890, the very changes and disturbances which have been fulfilled to the letter, and are still in course of fulfillment. Thousands of years ago the wise men of the East computed the duration of spiritual and astronomical cycles, and imbedded their information and prophecy while they were yet possessed of immense material wealth and influence in a building so unique and costly, and displaying in its erection such a fathomless depth of mechanical skill, that it is the despair of the architects of the modern world, not one of whom would venture to copy the interior, even if he should essay an imitation of the exterior of the great Egyptian pyramid. The great pyramid stands in one sense entirely alone; in another it has companions, for there are a large number of pyramids in Egypt, several at Gizeh alone, and many more in the vicinity; but these

are feeble copies, and for gaining an insight into the true nature of the secrets of the East, almost worthless; for though they are all of the same outward pattern, and all may have been originally designed for temples as well as mausoleums, they are quite modern, comparatively speaking, and being covered with innumerable hieroglyphics, prove themselves to be products of that age of deterioration, when the grand ennobling "solar worship" of Egypt was set aside for a groveling animalism, which was more like an improved fetishism borrowed from the interior of Africa, and the barbaric hordes dwelling there, than it resembled any system legitimately descended from the wisdom and religion of the wise men of the East. Every intelligent observer of the progress of humanity, and the career of religious ideas, must come to the conclusion at length, that religious opinions and ceremonies have been derived from two opposite sources, and that both of these have left a definite and almost ineffable impress, not only upon the thought of the world, but also upon architecture, art and language. The seemingly irreconcilable theories of natural and revealed religion are in reality at one. By what is usually called natural religion, is meant those ideas and expressions which have grown up among men as naturally as have flowers, birds, beasts and reptiles appeared in obedience to a natural law of growth, evolution or development. Ideas and ceremonies which have sprung into existence thus, have commenced their career very low down in the most inferior strata of human intelligence and morality.

The jelly fish, the tadpole and every other rudimentary form of life discovered by naturalists in the kingdoms of nature, has had and still has its counterpart in the kingdom of ideas and morals. Modern science tells us and gives proof of the truthfulness of its assertions, that every inferior expression of life is in the course of nature succeeded by some superior form, which is the phoenix arising out of the remnants of its decay. In the world

of mind we find ideas which are the exact counterparts of toads and lizards, and other vile and creeping things in the material realm of existence: as cold blooded creeping things are succeeded by warm blooded mammals, as animals displaying minute intelligence give place at length to most sagacious creatures, as barbaric man yields to his stately and civilized successor who is born through the lapse of ages through the working of heredity and the law of the improvement of species; so the human mind peeping out first through a dim small window and catching only the faintest glimpses of the spiritual horizon, has gradually so far improved his conceptions of the universe, and enlarged his knowledge of himself that to-day we have among us men and women whose ideas of life immortal are so stupendous and exalting in their grandeur that they fill us with the assurance that human nature is indeed divine and worthy of immortality, when truly unfolded. But as few superior minds rise as far above mediocrity as the highest Alps or Himalayas tower above the tablelands and valleys which surround them, so do we discover that in the olden ages, long ere the lamp of modern history was kindled, there were pioneers of progress, heralds of a brighter day, messianic souls who were all aglow with the flame of prophecy and inspiration, and these were they through whom surrounding people caught their first clear glimpses of immortal life and were led to accept a revealed religion vastly superior to any of the ordinary natural conclusions at which they in their ignorance could arrive. Undoubtedly some of these brilliant luminaries of ancient days were persons of rare natural talent and ability who gave themselves up to study and retirement and were in every sense the exceptions to the common run of humanity. These illustrated what scientists call a law of variety in nature, by means of which evolutionists think they can account largely for the improvements of races and the development of higher species. But in

addition to all facts seeming to favor this theory of a law of variety in nature, we most positively affirm the facts of mediumship to be in very large degree necessary to account for what may be properly called revealed knowledge and revealed religion. It is a well-known fact to all intelligent and impartial students of ancient history and Oriental literature, that there was a time, yea, there were many times, when the possession of a high degree of reliable mediumship entitled man, woman or child to exaltation to such high rank in esteem that even kings and emperors did not dare to declare war, or decide any important matter without consulting the oracles who were the *mediums* of those days. We do not deny that jugglery, charlatanism and imposture of every kind crept in and defiled the seats of those who in the original fulfilment of their mission were pure and pliant instruments in the hands of the denizens of spheres celestial. Human avarice, cupidity, greed of gain, love of place and power, all conspired to vitiate the moral atmosphere surrounding the oracles of old, while unscrupulous pretenders are never lacking to substitute craft and what the world calls "smartness" for genuine spiritual gifts. Through these contaminating influences the mediumistic, which was the prophetic, office gradually fell into disrepute and the glories of seership were lost in the fog of uncertainty and adventure which obscured them at times almost entirely from the vision of the world. But instances are not wanting in any history, sacred or secular, to prove the perpetual existence of genuine mediumship even in the darkest ages and most degenerate periods. The Hebrew tales of Joseph and Daniel are representative histories of the amazing gifts of insight and prophecy which were possessed by a faithful and illuminated few, who maintained their purity and were true to their high and holy trust even amid the demoralization of the most dissolute and unprincipled courts. The spirit world has ever interfered, so to speak, with the ordinary course of human

events, demonstrating its presence and making its power felt in most unlooked for and often in most unwelcomed ways.

The hand-writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast is a notable and typical illustration of the intervention of the spirit world when least expected, frustrating the best laid human plots and overturning the proudest empires founded on injustice. Shakspeare's statements in "Hamlet," in "Macbeth," and many others of his plays, illustrating the utter fallacy of the oft-reiterated assumption that the so-called dead never return to earth, and the kindred falsity that the grave tells no tales, are only echoes in comparatively modern literature of truths so old that they antedate the most ancient monuments upon earth, and explain how, far back in primeval ages, the idea of a revelation of truth direct from heaven became a part of current belief, while purely animal religion begins among savage men, and is the result of their groveling instincts, and the inferiority of their physical strength to that of the animals which surround them and often prey upon them. For a savage fetich to worship lion, bear, leopard, tiger, or serpent is simply natural. The mind instinctively turns to its superior, and worships a being endowed with strength superior to its own. Savage man has a physical ideal of greatness; he dreads superior bodily strength; size of limb and power of jaw alarm him, and at the same time excite his admiration; so when a barbarian, to a great extent defenceless against marauders of the forest, bows down to them and worships them, inscribes their forms upon his altars, and supplicates them as divinities to appease their ire,—even offering his children in sacrifice to them,—he obeys a natural, human instinct of worship or devotion to a higher power than he himself possesses; and while his ideal is low and the effects of it debasing, it is unquestionably an early glimmering of that glorious aspiration and true worship which will, in the fullness of time,

regenerate the world, and lead mankind to seek communion with, and swear allegiance to only those beings in the universe who, by their superior moral qualities and greater wisdom, entitle them to man's highest reverence and respect.

We may trace the relics of animal worship throughout the land of Egypt; we can witness how a debased, barbaric people have left their impress over all the land in marks of servitude and degradation; we can trace how woman has been man's vassal and his toy, and how oppression has ridden rough-shod over the land as might alone has constituted right; but, on the other hand, we can behold how mighty has been the power of Egypt under "the gods" ere yet it was demoralized beneath the Pharaohs. There is a tradition, and one widely accepted by scholars of renown, that the Pali, or Shepherd Kings, invaded Egypt, — say 5,000 years ago, — overrunning the land, turning out the native inhabitants, overthrowing their religion, and establishing themselves as despotic rulers. These men have the credit for being highly intelligent, and acquainted with many ancient mysteries, but destitute of mercy, kindness, or just consideration for the rights and liberties of the people whom they conquered. To this powerful and alien race the erection of the great pyramid has been attributed by many writers. We, however, do not concur in their judgment, as the pyramid appears to us far older than 5,000 years of age, though there are plausible reasons advanced by many, founded on astronomical coincidences, for supposing the date of its erection to have been either 2170, or about 3500 B.C. The Shepherd Kings unquestionably exerted a very powerful influence over all the land of Egypt, remodeling its institutions, changing its form and seat of government, and contributing generally to the advancement of science, literature, and art; and even if they did show themselves guilty of some considerable amount of inconsiderateness for the rights of the

nation they conquered, or the inhabitants of the land they invaded, what shall be said in extenuation of the conduct of the American and European colonists of the present age, who have from first to last despoiled the Indians of their lawful property, taking possession of the lands to which they were justly entitled, by rapine, plunder, and deceit, — breaking promises with the redskins over and over again, and then proudly asserting their natural and rightful superiority as a race destined by the decrees of Providence to take the place of an inferior people. There are many men, who certainly ought to know better, who persist in attributing all the cruelty perpetrated upon the Indians to the cunning and cruelty of that persecuted race, while, if the truth is to be told, it needs only to be stated that the Indian of to-day is far lower in the scale of humanity than he was 250 years ago, solely on account of the shameful manner in which he has been imposed upon, — the treatment he has received having, along with the demoralizing influence of strong drink introduced to him by white people, inflamed his basest passions, developed in him treachery and distrust, while at first his desire was only to protect his home and secure his property from invasion.

The history of one people and of one age is, with slight variations, the history of all; the self-same causes which led to the utter destruction of Egypt, Babylonia, Chaldea, Assyria, Greece and Rome are working to-day like insidious poison in the veins of every modern European nation, while the blood of free America is not untainted with this same deadly virus. No Goths and Vandals from without did more than hasten by a few short years the downfall of Rome, once the mistress of the world, proud if not prouder than the England of to-day. The Roman armies under Titus, which besieged Jerusalem and took captive the Jews, did no more than hasten by a little space the doom which must have overtaken Israel because she heeded not her prophets. The

bats and owls and bitterns which screech and hoot in ruined palaces and temples over all the land which was once the site of the favorite and most magnificent Asiatic civilization, are there in fulfilment of unerring prophecy which thunders and whispers forth its warnings in every age, in every clime beneath the sun to those who allow immorality to sit enthroned in gilded palaces and leave injured humanity to be trampled under the chariot wheels of haughty injustice. The spirit speaks to-day from out the midst of Egypt's ruins to the British government ; it utters its warning note of prayer and protest and says to proud, ambitious, regal England, beware, how, actuated by ambition you cross the Egyptian frontier and provoke the fates and furies to whip you for your ambitious desire to add to your territory and increase your power, with the very whips and scorpions with which imperial Egypt was flogged in centuries gone by. The Mahdi may appear to you a false prophet, but Mohamedanism has a better chance in Africa to-day than any European power. The Mahdi may be but the messenger of a Nemesis to bring the nations to justice and to purge them through suffering of their impurities ere a brighter day shall dawn. He may be unwelcome as the earthquake, the tornado, or the pestilence, but he has a mission to fulfil, and he will not be crushed or set aside until that mission is accomplished. How are the days so faithfully foretold by those prophetic ancients, who, guided by the dual light of science and inspiration, computed in the length of the grand gallery of the great pyramid ! The duration of the dispensation now closed is described in the $1881\frac{1}{2}$ inches of the grand gallery, every inch signifying a year—and was not this from A. D. 1 precisely the length of time till the war broke out in Egypt which embroiled England in deadly strife, which brought Mohamedanism and Christianity face to face with clashing steel and noise of cannon ? The cross and the crescent must fight it out between them ; neither sign

belongs to the new period, cross and crescent alike are partial and but fragments of a whole, while the majestic emblem of the circle enthroned on high as the sign of duty and justice in the palmy days of Egypt's greatest glory of old must be recovered and reinstated in its former place of power. The grim old Sphinx must have its question practically answered in the modern world, and it will be answered in Egypt and in many other climes in the next century, during which modern nations European and American will clasp hands with Egypt and with India upon the threshold of the King's chamber in which the solid lidless sarcophagus, built in as a portion of the stone edifice itself and not placed there afterwards, stands as the silent but all-expressive monitor and revealer that by the purification of the nations through strife and storm the day shall dawn when there shall be free and open intercourse between all civilized people.

One language, one religion, one science, one government, shall blend all nations in the bonds of peace and amity, while the lidless sarcophagus reveals the unveiling of the tomb of mystery in which truths have so long been shrouded, perfect emancipation from civil and religious bondage, and the coming to all parts of the world prepared to bask in the sunlight of truth and liberty of an age of peace, good will, equality and prosperity. But the passage from the grand gallery to the King's chamber is long and the way is painful and toilsome in the extreme, one must crawl on hands and knees to traverse it. What symbols this but the present period of universal anarchy, distress and warfare which makes these times, times of unparalleled unrest and strife, the abasement of nobles so called, the elevation of the masses of mankind, the awful means employed to bring about these ends in many quarters, the alarmingly unsettled condition of the weather, the prevalence of storms and disasters by land and sea, together with the dreadful ravages of sickness and the increased rate of mortality, are all signs of the end, not

the world, but of the age, — one of those periods of about 2,000 years which come abruptly to a close with great and stirring events, only that a new era may begin with greater purity, knowledge, liberty and peace. There shall be seven vials of wrath outpoured upon the earth, in the figurative language of the Apocalypse, which is a Kabalistic document from end to end; but sevenfold (meaning perfect, entire, and righteous) judgment, though seemingly indicative of heaven's wrath on sinful man, is only God; and nature's way of putting wrongs to rest and cleansing the world of the filth which has accumulated both morally and physically during a long period of comparative quiescence; as many persons declare they never enjoyed such good health in all their lives as they are now experiencing just after a short and painful illness has purged their system of its dross, so the world and all its institutions, having passed through a tortuous passage which leads to the King's chamber, have every cause to raise its loudest songs of praise and gratitude for the trial by means of which alone it could have been redeemed and saved.

Orthodox Christian interpreters of the Pyramid, as we have remarked before, have no doubt been as correct as any one in the elaborately detailed accounts which they have published of the construction of the pyramid and its measurements, but when they undertake to support an unwarrantable hypothesis that the end of an age or the end of the world, they allow bigotry and narrow-mindedness to obscure the brilliancy of the light which they might otherwise obtain through their own diligent researches and laborious calculations. An extremely orthodox pamphlet, following in the track of J. F. Smyth and Mr. Seiss, makes the transition period symbolized in the passage connecting the grand gallery with the king's chamber to mean the final harvest of the world now almost instantly, while the second coming of Christ, and the establishment of the new heavens and

the new earth, are to be preceded or accompanied by the total destruction or everlasting perdition of all sinners upon earth. From the same source we are informed that the sanctuary above is to be a haven of refuge during a time of universal tribulation upon earth for those who can mount as on eagles' wings to a place of refuge which those who can only walk cannot possibly attain. Truth lies buried in that idea, for the pyramid, as unveiled by the spirit world and those on earth who have access to its hidden meanings, plainly says that, during the distress in all the world, those who are so spiritualized that their affections are on things above, those who have been faithful through all previous trials, will be gainers instead of sufferers by this trial, through which all less advanced spiritually must pass, while the steep, sudden, and awful declivity down which anything falling must be lost in a soundless abyss, or drowned in a well connecting with the Nile, undoubtedly refers to the sudden and unexpected overthrow of tyranny and wrong in all its hydra-headed forms. Such, in briefest outline, are some of our conclusions based upon an examination of Egypt's greatest pyramid. Crudely and hurriedly have we sketched a mere outline, leaving it to you to fill in the details from time to time as new light strikes you and further information comes within your grasp. Egypt and its antiquities form a boundless theme, and to do it justice you must be possessed of an accumulation of facts and wealth of illustration so copious that years would be consumed in dispensing to the public, knowledge on the subject even in the briefest way.

Egypt: Past, Present and Future.

OUR lecture of last Sunday upon the Ancient Wonders of the Land of Egypt, though only enabling us to present you with a meagre sketch of those renowned antiquities, has, we trust, awakened some earnest thought, not mere idle curiosity, concerning the past history of man, and the future destiny of nations. Egypt was at one time, and for a considerable period, the unrivaled centre of learning upon earth. The opinion has long been current among philologists, naturalists, geologists, and other students of anthropology and cosmogony, that Africa was very probably the cradle of man. Theologians also are not lacking to give testimony in this direction borrowed from holy writ itself, for while the second chapter of Genesis, as we have often informed you, gives an account of the origin of a peculiar people, a special race; the preceding chapter is the one which professes to contain a record of the original creation of mankind. When we speak on Genesis and geology, we shall endeavor to enter more fully than we possibly can on this occasion, into the distinctive origin of the various races of man. This evening we shall have said all that time will permit us to observe under this heading, when we have made the statement, that though in one sense we are all brothers, all of one blood, in another sense the five great races of the world have not proceeded from one common stock, but each has known a separate parentage. These five distinct races are well known to possess distinctive characters that they never lose. It is only possible to produce a common race by intermarriages from generation to generation. The common race

is yet to be evolved, and no doubt will be ere long here upon American soil, where many students of man's history are finding ever multiplying evidences that once in the far distant past races closely allied to those indigenous to Asia and Africa lived and flourished. The North American Indians are the last degenerate relics of these once powerful peoples. The Aztecs and Mound Builders display clearly the marvellous ingenuity of ancient oriental races; while at Yucatan, and all over the central part of the American continent, in Mexico and in Peru, in various parts of California, all along the Pacific coast, are to be found innumerable traces of a period when the east and the west were connected by lands long since submerged, and by navigation carried on to an extent unequalled even in these days of marvellous maritime exploits. Ignatius Donnelly, in his *Atlantis*, has brought forward incontestable evidence in support of many of these positions. The deep sea soundings of the *Dolphin*, *Challenger* and many other vessels have settled the question forever as to the presence of volcanic debris, and the massive remains of extensive sunken islands beneath the Atlantic waves; while the Pacific Ocean bears similar testimony to sunken territory beneath its waters.

Dr. Shedd, the author of a most outrageous defence of the doctrine of endless punishment inserted in the *North American Review* about a year ago, sneers at the possibility of the calculations of modern explorers, who in some degree and manner accord with Solon and with Plato, being other than ridiculous; but a man who could write such an article as he has written in defence of the most barbarous and blasphemous dogma which has ever passed current as a religious truth among men is surely quite consistent when he wilfully shuts his eyes to the hieroglyphics which God has written upon the pages of his creation, that he may persuade mankind to follow him into the subterranean vaults of a dark and awful theology in which no ray of light can penetrate that is not

kindled by the machinations of designing priests, who, through the long ages of the nightmare of dread and superstition, have striven to extinguish the lamp of the spirit in conscience, and the lamp of reason in the intellect, that, lured by the *ignis fatuus* of ecclesiastical usurpation, men might bow before an imaginary God of vengeance, who reveals his frightful form in the cavern of superstition; while the true God, who reveals himself in sun, moon and stars, in rocks, trees, flowers and birds, and most of all, in the intuitions of humanity, and through the mediumship of loving seers and prophets, is no more recognized in these dreary, underground prison houses which confine both intellect and spirit, than the beauties of the starry firmament are seen by men whose eyes are blinded with the smoke of dingy cities, or who, in musty cellars, without windows, see nothing of the universal light which cannot pierce the walls of their dungeons. It is high time that the world awake to the necessity of rending the veil which has so long been thrown over the truth which the book of nature has to reveal. Truth can never be divided against itself; error is always contradictory, and therefore its kingdom is inevitably brought to desolation. History has been falsified to suit the arrogant demands of haughty prelates, knowledge has been suppressed in favor of associations who have determined to bind hand and foot the soul and intellect of man, and we warn you that even among modern Spiritualists in America, in England, in Australia, in all parts of Europe, and among Theosophists as well, despite the boasted breadth and liberality of their sentiments, there are many wolves in sheep's clothing, both in and out of the material form. When we are led by the spirit of truth we are free, we are committed to serve no clique, we are the instruments of no sect or party, we are ready to behold truth from all standpoints, we attach but small importance to externals, we take no personal names, we limit truth to no especial channels, but are

ready to heed the voice of God within our own and others' souls, and to read the word of God where Shakespeare told us we could find it, In running brooks, in babbling streams, in valleys, or on mountains, listening to sermons in stones, and finding good in everything.

Egypt is our text-book for this evening, her history is a figure of the rise, progress, ruin and decay of all nations. Their future will be a fulfillment of a universal prophecy of resurrection. Egypt and India dispute together as to which should bear the palm for greatest antiquity. The books of Hermes in the one country, and the Vedas in the other, are so nearly alike that they are scarcely distinguishable the one from the other. Both compilations are in blank verse, both are highly mystical, their spiritual or esoteric side being deeply veiled in the garb of literal history, which is in parts so extremely strange that no reader can pronounce it other than fanciful. Allegories are always founded partly on fact, and are in part products of the imagination. The parables of the New Testament have a historical as well as a romantic side; but as fragments of exact history they are of very little worth, while as illustrative of universal spiritual truth, they are extremely valuable. They are pictures to be shown to children in understanding, but are not needed by those of maturer spiritual growth. The writers of Bibles were evidently wiser and more honest than many interpreters have been, for they took small pains to conceal the fact that they were writing spiritual histories, dealing with facts connected with the soul and its relations to sense. These facts after a while became perverted until only the literal, historical, or biographical elements were admitted, and these being very imperfect and often wholly unsupported by reliable contemporaneous evidence, the doctrine was easily promulgated by free-thinkers in a boasted age of reason that Bibles were mere masses of idle legend calculated to enslave but never to enlighten those who read them.

To-day a new departure is being taken, but unfortunately the alloy of pride and self-interest is sure to mar every move in a reformatory direction to a certain extent, as there are always persons ready to declare they alone are infallible interpreters of God's will to man, the only chosen oracles of heaven. Many persons see or pretend to see themselves in prophecy, and desire all the world to recognize in them re-embodied angels or returned Messiahs. But to the enlightened Spiritualist all such pretensions and vagaries are detestable; universal, not personal and local applications which limit truth, are what we need. The gods and goddesses of old can be regarded as personifications of the powers of nature and also as representative rulers and mediums who were after a while adored with divine honors when they had passed into spirit life, even though during their earthly career they may have been no more perfect than the Romulus of history or tradition, who, though made away with by the people who felt his presence to be inimical to their country's interests, worshipped him as a divinity, and placed him in the category of Rome's presiding deities.

Antedating all history which deals with actual personages whose names are found graven on the tablets and other monumental remains of ancient Egypt, was the long period of almost incalculable duration when Egypt was ruled by rulers vaguely called "the gods." It cannot be doubted that about 2170 B.C. Egypt was at the height of its glory; it had not then begun to really decline. At the time of the exodus of the Israelites, Egypt was a waning power, and was then governed by a despotic race of kings. The kings "who knew not Joseph," were rulers who had departed from the wise, humane precedent of their fathers, and had corrupted themselves and the country they ruled, which was soon given over to wantonness and cruelty, when it speedily became a prey to nations stronger and younger, and also then far poorer than itself. The very ancient history of Egypt is neces-

sarily shrouded in the deepest mystery. An Encyclopædia may give you the best conjectural information procurable, but conjecture is often misleading, and as we are not in a position to outwardly verify the astounding statements we might be able to make, derived from sources of information not accessible to the general public, we shall not attempt to overtax your credulity by framing an elaborate statement concerning Egypt before the deluge, though we should certainly consider that we held back a considerable portion of the truth if we did not remind you of the singular fact that Egypt has left no traces of a slow and gradual growth; her earliest monuments being her most splendid ones; this circumstance alone largely corroborates the theory that Egypt long, long ago, was a colony of Atlantis, the inhabitants of which island being at the zenith of their glory when they colonized Egypt, at once established there a condition of affairs similar to the state of their own country. The deluge alluded to in Genesis as having taken place about four thousand years ago, was a spiritual wave of enlightenment which swept over the then civilized part of the earth in the dual form which spiritual waves ever assume. They are invariably baptisms of water and fire; the water cleanses, and the fire consumes. The truths which are covered with the dust of error, and alloyed with the mire of sensuality, have to be bathed in the pure stream of water which flows out of the rock of ages, which is none other than the imperishable and unalterable truth itself, which can alone reach mankind when purity of heart invites it, and provides for it a shrine. The fire is the destructive, and at the same time, the illuminating power which cometh down from heaven, that is, from those exalted spheres of spiritual light and knowledge from which matchless inspirations descend to earth at the close of every cycle, age, or era. After the flood a new dispensation began, that which is often misrepresented in connection with spiritual dispensations is

that they refer to a literal change in the entire condition of the physical earth. The water is said to have drowned the world, only leaving eight persons alive, who were saved in an ark of gopher wood made in obedience to a plan given to Noah by revelation from heaven, — two animals, one male and one female, of every species being also preserved, and seven of every kind of “clean” animal. It is now predicted all over Christendom that Christ is quickly coming to judge the living and the dead, and then the world will be burned by fire, and the condition of all its inhabitants will be fixed in heaven or hell to all eternity. The second coming of Christ, as the flood in the days of Noah, if not understood spiritually or esoterically, is a misleading and erroneous dogma utterly at variance with God’s word, as we read it in universal nature, both on the spiritual and material pages of the vast and comprehensive scroll which God holds out before the eyes of all who can read the writings. A flood of water may have originally meant a glacial flood, or a great submergence of land and encroachment of the ocean; but these physical disturbances and upheavals attendant upon the inauguration of spiritual epochs have been but the smallest and least significant changes which have been wrought and re-wrought during the circle of the ages in obedience to spiritual laws, of which the laws displayed in matter are the outermost effects and vibrations. Pyramids and Sphinxes all marked the time of Egypt’s great supremacy over all other lands. These massive buildings must memorialize for all succeeding generations an acme of civilization and knowledge, which has now for many centuries been but as a dream half remembered and half forgotten in the annals of the world. Egypt died as in her solemn rituals she had caused her neophytes to die figuratively, and then to rise from out the mystic tomb, sarcophagus or bath, as a symbol of the risen life and the new birth from sin to righteousness, from folly to wisdom, from personal ambition to newness of heart and universal loving kindness.

Egypt perished, and yet not wholly; the fires may slumber for ages on her deserted and desolate altars, but they cannot be utterly extinguished. The torches carried by her children in the days of her might must still file down the ages, carried perhaps in other hands, and through other climes; but the witness of the spirit never ceases, the truth never dies, the inspiration once granted is never withdrawn. And so when Egypt was no longer great, when she no more maintained her freedom, when she became a land of darkness and a house of bondage, we are told the Israelites borrowed her precious things, but they never returned them; and so in their wanderings through the desert, they perpetuated in moving tabernacle and in golden calf the truth and the folly, the purity of worship and the gross idolatries which ever went side by side in the days of her majesty and might, for ALL her children were never participants in her brightest illuminations.

We must now touch briefly in this hurried sketch upon a topic of great interest, especially to Bible students, viz., the Israelitish people, and their sojourn in and exodus from the land of Egypt under the leadership of Jehovah, employing Moses as his servant to accomplish the deliverance of his chosen people. It has long been supposed that the descendants of Abraham were once a large and powerful nation, a distinctive race, occupying for many centuries the land of Palestine, and to support this assumption historical proofs have not been wanting. Josephus in his history of the Jews, describes their battles and their victories, and in every way confirms popular impressions concerning them. There has however sprung up in recent years a growing conviction among the learned that the Israelites were always more of an order and a religious sect than a distinctive race of mankind. They have, it is true, certain physical peculiarities which distinguish them, but they so easily adapt themselves to the climate and customs of all countries wheresoever they

may wander, that by this fact alone they go far to establish the position that they are the offspring of many nations, and that they are in reality a widespread brotherhood held together by many traditions, beliefs and customs, such as unify masons, odd-fellows, and others, who for mutual protection, learning and fellowship, have banded themselves together independent of the country of their birth or the color of their skin. As every order enforces certain discipline upon its members, and requires all to pass through initiation ere they can be admitted to fellowship, so among the Jews, circumcision has always been the gate through which all males have been received into the commonwealth of Israel. We are constantly informed in the Old Testament that the stranger and the slave might become Israelites provided they submitted to the rite of circumcision and otherwise conformed to the discipline of the Mosaic law. Baptism in the Christian church has admitted men, women and children to the communion of the faithful, and this sacrament or ordinance has always been regarded by Christians as the rite which supercedes the Jewish act of circumcision. We do not deny that there was once a time when the Jews possessed a considerable degree of political power, church and state having been constantly allied so closely that religion and government have walked hand in hand for many generations. The old Sanhedrim of Jerusalem possessed at one time, according to the most authentic history extant, immense political influence, and we have no reason for doubting that there was a time when the children of Israel were distinguished above all others for learning and morality. The decalogue is a masterpiece of wisdom, as the ten commandments form the basis of all civilized legislation through the world, and no one of them can with impunity be set aside. A popular mistake does not regard the commandments too highly, but errs in attributing them exclusively to a single tribe or people; they were gradually brought together, culled from the

most ancient laws and scriptures upon earth, slowly amassed one by one as humanity progressed out of barbarianism, till at length they were all rolled together, and formed the code of morals for which the Israelites have been so justly celebrated; for though according to their own traditions, often stiff-necked, idolatrous and barbarous, they have never relaxed their hold upon the essential verities of true religion and morals, having at all times contended for the unity of God, and the necessity of a strictly moral life as a passport to the divine favor, and to true happiness either here or hereafter. It has often been a matter of concern to theologians and Bible students why the Old Testament speaks so little of the immortality of the human soul, and why Moses is so seldom alluded to as even hinting at it in his address to the people, over which he was appointed by Jehovah as a leader and teacher. A glance at the Talmud, the Rabbinical commentaries, the Jewish Kabala, and other parts of Israelitish literature not usually studied in the Sunday schools and Bible classes, will convince every unprejudiced reader that immortality has always been taught in Israel, and that the consciousness of man after the death of the physical body has always been an article of the accepted Jewish creed. We might cite many passages from the Old Testament itself to prove that this is the case; but it is not necessary for us to do so, at least in this discourse, as we are now specially concerned with Egyptian doctrines revived in Israel. We shall find by reference to the "book of the dead," which contains a fair epitome of the old Egyptian ideas of immortality, that life beyond the grave was a cardinal doctrine of the Egyptians, so far as we know never disputed by the learned, though confounded with gross and sensuous conceptions of a corporeal resurrection on a day of future judgment by the superstitious and illiterate, as a perversion of the truth of immortality outlined in the New Testament has been almost universal in Christendom for at least fifteen

centuries. You are probably all aware that mummies testify in a very curious manner to the adulterate faith of ancient Egypt concerning immortality. Some mummies in the British Museum, London, are said to be over three thousand years old, but how much over three thousand years very few antiquarians or egyptologists pretend to decide. Their antiquity is dubious, but if less or not more than four thousand years of age, they only date back to the commencement of Egypt's decline, for her palmy days were well nigh over ere the children of Jacob first set their foot upon Egyptian soil in the days when Joseph was appointed, because of his wonderful seership, to the highest office next the sovereign. The appointment of Joseph to so exalted a station because he could interpret Pharaoh's dreams is a most significant fact forcibly illustrating the honor which was shown to genuine spiritual mediumship in ancient days in one of the most ancient and marvellous of all the lands beneath the sun. Divination was a twofold power, a two-edged sword, a great curse or a great blessing according as it was rightfully employed or mischievously abused, and it is only necessary to refer you here to the co-existence of white and black magic, genuine communion with pure and holy spirits, and an unhallowed and corrupting necromancy, to answer every objection brought by professing ministers of Christ's gospel against Spiritualism pure and simple.

There never was a time when fire could warm but could not destroy, and there never was a time when fire could destroy but could not warm; there never was a time when the raging flames, which, let loose and uncontrolled, could destroy both life and property, were not in the form of heat a necessity to man's health and comfort. The very fire that warms the starving outcast back to life and health can destroy the earthly lives of millions if they become its prey. The water which all creatures need to slake their thirst, to cleanse and refresh their persons, can drown in an instant the brightest

specimen of manhood. In proportion to the extent of good that any force or element is able to accomplish, must necessarily be its power for evil when perverted. Thus it has come to pass, and thus it happens still, that wherever the greatest truths are revealed, there are the most shameless counterfeits produced to imitate them; wherever a great and widespread benefaction is extended to mankind, there the poisonous tree of evil flourishes also; it is for every one of us to try the spirits, to eschew the evil, and to choose the good; to let the mingled stream of good and evil, and the varied fruits on the tree of knowledge which ever grows in the garden of the world, sharpen our powers of discrimination until we become truly unfolded in the gift of discerning spirits, for if not by any outward demonstration of their presence, by any visible sign or token, we may know them by the influence they carry with them, and the effects produced wherever their teachings are heeded and their counsel obeyed.

Egyptian views on immortality, and the conditions of spirits who had but recently passed into spirit life, were both curious and interesting, and though often clothed in mystic guise, veiled in allegory, and portrayed in singular dreams of transmigration, nevertheless contained the very essence and root of the highest spiritual teachings now being imparted to the earth through the blessed open gateway of modern spirit intercourse. Osiris, the angel who dwelt in the sun, the presiding deity or angelic ruler of this solar system, though not the Infinite Spirit whose personal embodiment was never taught by the wise sages and seers of the East, is described to us in Egyptian literature and art, as the great judge, before whose bar every spirit must pass immediately it quits the mortal frame. Before the throne of the calm, august, imperial god Osiris, are two female deities, represented as holding scales in their hands; the modern popular figure of justice as a blindfolded woman holding a balance is a relic

of Egyptian art. In these scales every act of the spirit departed from earth is carefully weighed, and the balance is decided in every case with scrupulous exactitude. If the evil acts preponderate so as to weigh down the left scale more than the right, the spirit is doomed to undergo a series of expiatory existences, often in animal or reptile forms, where in conditions of abject misery and deep humiliation, the prodigal, reduced as it were to the contents of a swine's trough, to borrow a metaphor from the Christian New Testament, is gradually brought to his right mind, and is slowly redeemed or resurrected. If on the other hand the good acts exceed the evil so that the right-hand scale weighs down the heaviest, the spirit is ushered into realms of graded bliss, and commences an upward and onward journey through many successive spheres of progress, until at length it is lost to human vision amid the glories of celestial realms.

Another personage besides Osiris and the female divinities, is Typhon, the spirit of darkness, the accusing angel mentioned in the book of Job, a dramatic tale undoubtedly founded on an Egyptian allegory. The devil's advocate, as he is sometimes called, is as necessary to the completion of the trial as the representative of the angel guardian; thus the original of the personal Satan, so much dreaded and accredited with such immense power by all orthodox Christians, is in reality not an evil personage at all, but one who need only be shunned and feared by those afflicted with guilty consciences. The embalming of the body is largely an element of superstition imported into the Egyptian faith by those unacquainted with the spiritual view of the resurrection taught in the mysteries and allegories to all who could see deeper than their surface. There were three kinds or degrees of embalming: one for the highest of the land, one less expensive and less enduring for the ordinary mortal who had attained some measure of distinction, and a third and much inferior mode for the poor, while those who

had the reputation of being very wicked were not embalmed at all.

Throughout Egypt, in all her ancient literature, inscribed on all her hoary monuments, we discover traces of "Christianity before Christ." Six thousand years ago at least, the Egyptians believed in the mediatorial God who had once appeared on earth as a mighty angel, and had after a brief earthly existence ascended to the realms of glory, the innermost spheres of light from which communications but rarely reach the earth apart from intermediary instrumentality. The life, sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, are all transcripts from early Egyptian models, as the fathers of the Christian church, not knowing how to fix with accuracy upon genuine historical data, and being many of them better acquainted with the esoteric or spiritual truths veiled in the mythologies than are the majority even of students and antiquarians to-day, saw in the life of the exemplar Jesus a befitting fulfillment in actual human personality of the innermost stages of growth, through which every soul must pass ere at length it attains to moral fruition. Some fruit on the tree of life is ripened by the heat of the sun sooner than other fruit, which though yet green, will in due time be as ripe as the ripest which has ever been exhibited to man in the persons of the world's greatest teachers. The Avatars or Messiahs who appear periodically are angels in the spiritual heavens who shine through those especially endowed ones on the earth who are their mediums. Thus gods do not assume the forms of men, clothe themselves with flesh, and undergo vicarious suffering to redeem man from the just and necessary consequences of misdoing; but angels belonging to highest orders in the realms of spirit which exercise any direct supervision over the affairs of earth, express a measure of their light on earth through human minds and bodies, who are their instruments, and from time to time visit the various districts of the earth which,

one after another, become culminating centres of special waves of inspiration.

After the Pharaohs had grown profligate, and the country had sadly degenerated under their tyrannical misrule, Egypt became subject to Greece. Then arose the period of Greek philosophy which remodelled the old Egyptian thought, and reset the gems in the crowns of the philosophers which once had shone in the diadems of Egyptian priests. Plato was the last of the long illustrious line. With him ended the brilliant chain of philosophers who had made Greece glorious. Demoralization set in at Athens, despite learning, and the arts, academies and gymnasiums, physical symmetry and strength, and intellectual culture. Morality was at a low ebb when the downfall of Greece began, then she in her turn yielded to young and hardy Rome, just in the vigor of new life, about to become the mistress of the world. Rome ruled Egypt, and then she failed, till where once the Roman empire had held its supremest sway, ruin and desolation made havoc of the fairest cities of the Italian plain. After the introduction of Christianity into Europe, this new form of religion crossed over to Africa, and established Episcopal Sees in many ancient cities, Carthage, and Alexandria being noted centres of the new religion. At Alexandria the finest collection of MSS. ever brought together existed. From them Solon, Plato, and other Greeks had gathered information concerning the great Atlantic deluge. From these same ancient sources Christian bishops gathered facts and symbols which were soon connected with the teachings of Jesus until Essenian-Judaism, Greek, Roman, Persian and Egyptian theology, and mythology, soon led to a heterogeneous compound of ceremonies, and dogmas which the Athanasian party in the œcumenical council of the fourth century endeavored to formulate into a binding confession of faith which should admit of no protest or revision as long as the Church Catholic on earth endured. When Rome de-

cayed, Mohammed soon arose. Mohammedanism suited the voluptuous demands of orientals. His dreams of paradise were sensuous, and he so contrived to combine religion with the gratification of the senses that multitudes gladly flocked to his standard when his tenets became known. For thirteen years he was a man of peace, of indomitable courage, and no doubt sincere in his convictions. Then the thirst for conquest possessed him. Allah told him warfare was pleasant to his divine majesty, and the prophet of Allah must needs by force compel his soldiery to fight and to subdue, till under the sign of the crescent, as under that of the cross, bloodshed was commanded as the behest of heaven.

Then came dark and troublous days for Egypt, who shorn of all her ancient power, impoverished, subdued, dependent, must at last be stripped of her literary treasures; the Alexandrian library was destroyed, and all its contents burned by the fanatical orders of a Mussulman, then the Caliphs of Egypt desolated the country more and more, till at length, having crushed out all liberty in the native inhabitants, they became sole possessors and sovereign rulers of the land. To-day Cairo, Alexandria and other cities of the Nile country are beautiful in their decay. Here and there a splendid mosque or gorgeous palace lifts its minarets or towers to the sky, as though silently appealing to the powers above to restore this land of desolated grandeur. England's interference in Egyptian affairs in the interests of her commerce has brought about many improvements, so that the state of the country now is by no means as pitiable as once it was. Sanitary precautions are now being taken to stem the tide of virulent disease, which has so often swept away thousands of the poor inhabitants. The cholera has abated, the climate is becoming more genial, and the soil more fertile; and though to-day saddened and down-trodden by the tramp of soldiers and the noise of cannon, Egypt's possibilities for self-government are developing

more and more each day. Mohammed's mission is to the African interior. England, under divine providence, will ere long be instrumental in paving the way for Egypt to shake off allegiance to all foreign powers, and in the days not far distant we expect to see Egypt, India, Australia, Canada, each and every country now subjected to rulership from abroad, so far established in the true principles of liberty and self-governing ability as will enable it to become a free republic, or enlightened democracy, where the government of the people, by the people and for the people, will be an accomplished fact in practice as in theory. Liberty, equality, fraternity, are three mighty words, true watchwords of a genuine republic, prophetic of the future state of man, though yet a hollow mockery in many modern lands, where want, crime, and ignorance take refuge under shelter of a free republican form of government. Notre Dame and all the ancient churches of Paris may declare because the government so ordains that these three words are identical with republican institutions, but the whole question at issue is, can people intelligently govern themselves? If not, though the reins be nominally in their hands, they will really be driven by oppressive rulers. A free Egypt is not the dream of a romancist or enthusiast, not a Quixotic fancy, but a sterling prophecy is the prediction often made that Egypt will yet be truly free, and when the work of brave Gen. Gordon and other stalwart heroes shall be seen from a distance in its true proportions, no one who can read the fulfillment of prophecy will fail to observe how intensely significant have been the agitations caused and changes wrought within the present decade of this nineteenth century.

Reluctantly we close our brief and hurried sketch of Egypt and her history. From the ruins of Karnac of nameless antiquity, to the latest relic purchased by an English resident of Cairo; from the ancient pyramids to the Coptic churches, and from these relics of a mongrel

Christianity to the Mohammedan mosques and Jewish synagogues of later date, to the new English institutions now being established there, every stone, every brick laid upon Egyptian soil is eloquent; the stones cry out; if men shall hold their peace the stones will ever cry; the stony beds of rocky substance cry out everywhere to the geologist, of evolution, progress, advancement, even when they tell of the fierce throes and awful struggles through which old mother earth has passed, in days when fire and flood have rent her bosom in twain and covered her fairest isles with ocean, the stones which men have not laid one upon another cry, but the stones which men have heaped together cry also, and, if possible, in louder tones. England and America must in the persons of their children set foot in Egypt. Attention must be directed thither, and to India also, for these are the cradles of our modern civilization; and as the aged man turns back to the home of his childhood ere he finally quits the mortal frame, so will the modern nations of the world, their religions and their governments, turn back to Egypt and to India ere the death knell sounds for them, and a new nation, a new order, a new religion springs to life as the phœnix from the heap of ashes. Whittier's sublime lay well expresses the truth concerning past and future when he exclaims,

"The new transcends the old,
In signs and wonders manifold.
Serfs rise up men, the olive waves
With roots deep set in battle graves."

The old is gone, the past is dead, we cannot resurrect it; we would not if we could. We do not sigh for theocracies and monarchies of old when the people were all subject and the ruling few alone were all dominant. We do not sigh for cloistered cell or sequestered shade where once the oracles gave forth their counsel to the rulers. All the magic mystery of the past became defiled. Spiritualism in the older days degenerated into witchcraft.

Pharaoh's magicians could turn their sticks into serpents and their serpents into sticks. They could bring up lice and flies and frogs and locusts to swarm over the land and poison the earth and rivers and starve the population, but they could not in the days of selfishness and worldly power remove the curses which the sins of the land had brought upon the people. Beware of occultism, psychology, magic, unless you can approach them with purity of heart and will. Beware of trusting in masonic temples and gorgeous rituals, these will not save a country. Egypt died in poverty and disgrace, despite her learning, her magic, and her temples, because she forsook the way of right and grieved the spirit of truth, which would willingly have saved her. The departed throng who once filled these now desolate halls are yet alive and speaking; the air is heavy with their presence; their spiritual forms are seen to-day by the clairvoyant's vision; their voices are heard by the ear of the clairaudient, and these hosts of ancient spirits who have so many and such strange tales to tell to earth to-day, are only waiting and importuning you as they wait, to lend them listening ears and co-operate with them in rebuilding the walls of their old Jerusalem. Seek the new light, welcome the new day, invoke the higher truth, and more than Egypt ever had to lose, we of the modern world assuredly may gain.

The Riddle of the Sphinx and its Spiritual Meaning.

ON two previous Sunday evenings, we have considered the one greatest wonder of the land of Egypt, the pyramid of Gizeh. This evening it becomes our task to endeavor to unravel the mystery of the Sphinx. That grim old giant standing near the great pyramid in the delta of the Nile, as you are doubtless aware, has a most singular appearance, and has a no less strange and formidable story attached to it. An ancient legend or tradition says that the Sphinx must stand there in solitary grandeur age after age, propounding its question to every passer by, until at length one shall answer correctly, then will the Sphinx destroy itself and be no more. The story has often been told of one traveller having answered the mysterious question correctly already, and that when he gave the right answer, the Sphinx drowned itself in the river, in a fit of unconquerable rage. But the Sphinx still stands, denying the assumption that its question has ever been satisfactorily answered; thus the story must be a prophecy in so far as it relates to the destruction of the questioner. But these strange Oriental tales have always two interpretations. They all have an exoteric and an esoteric side; moreover, they all relate to the individual man in a narrower, and to universal mankind in their broader signification. The Sphinx is practically defunct for those few highly endowed mortals, who, through diligent research, or marvellous inspiration, have passed from the bondage of the letter to the freedom of the spirit, and have thereby, to use the language of the

New Testament, experienced the new life, having passed, as an apostle says, "from death unto life;" while the mystic Sphinx still remains for all to pass by, who have not as yet received knowledge of the real meaning and true purpose of existence. As the pyramid was the king of problems solved in ancient architecture, so the Sphinx is the queen of riddles; as the pyramid explains the relation of all parts to the whole, in a perfect geometrical figure and mathematical sum, so the Sphinx is the embodiment of each individual human life; and while dealing indirectly with the boundless necessities of universal being, has a particular message to each individual, and is the most eloquent preacher on earth on the rightful connection of brain and heart, soul and body, intuition and intellect. You are doubtless all familiar with the external aspect of the Sphinx. It has a woman's head, and a lion's body. The woman's head unquestionably symbolizes affection and intelligence, while the lion's body is indicative of strength, vigor, and material powers. The lion, as king of beasts, is the symbol of the highest physical development conceivable; while woman, in preference to man, is chosen as the symbol of the spirit, because through woman, rather than through man, the highest expression of soul-life is given to the world. Woman, being the mother of the race, plays a part in the development of mankind so prominent that man's share in forming the character of future generations is very small in comparison. Not only does the Sphinx represent the true relations existing between the animal nature and the spiritual, but also typifies the ultimate and complete sovereignty of the soul over the intellect. Not that the intellectual powers should be discounted or set aside; not that reason should be regarded as the enemy of spirit, and be allowed to be idle, while only the affections or emotions are brought prominently into play; but all the reasoning powers of man must be rendered subservient to the soul, intellect being the willing and plastic instru-

ment of the moral nature, which should be in all things, at all times, lord over the senses or carnal appetites.

As there are many pyramids, while only one is really worthy of diligent study, so there are many Sphinxes in the land of Egypt, but only one of these will repay us for the time and thought we must expend upon it if we would comprehend its teachings, and learn the Oriental secret of existence, as therein enshrined and disclosed. Disclosed, do we say? Yes, to the one who can answer the question propounded by the image; but deeply veiled in impenetrable mystery to all save those who can see through the window of imagery into the palace hall of wisdom, where the greatest truths ever revealed to earth stand displayed in glowing beauty, though clad oftentimes in Oriental costume, which, by its foreign appearance, repels many a western eye; but the day is now rapidly approaching when there shall be no longer an abyss or yawning gulf between east and west; truth itself, independent of the name it bears, or the forms in which it is couched, will be accepted by all nations as the one pearl of greatest price, to obtain which it is well worth the while of the strictest utilitarian to part with all besides, if he can but possess himself of this most glorious central gem, whose lustre will shine with undiminished — yea, with thousand-fold clearer radiance, when every symbol, veil, or shadow, shall have passed away, and all shall find the throne of God, the mercy seat, the shekinah glory, within themselves as soon as they have become holy temples consecrated to all uprightness.

The great conflict between religions has always been, and still is, on the question of orthodoxy. Rome ever maintains that she is the seat and centre of power divine on earth; that man's individual conscience is always liable to err, but that the voice of his holiness the pope can never err when deciding a matter of ecclesiastical doctrine or discipline, as it is not he who speaks, but the Holy Ghost which speaketh through him. Protestantism,



fiercely denying the doctrine of papal authority, has, however, established in the stead of an infallible man, an infallible book; but while the infallible man is easier to comprehend than the infallible book, the idea that there is an infallible book for man to read, the discovery that every individual has a divine and inalienable right to peruse the contents of that volume freely as he will, whenever and wherever he pleases, is a truth, though in a broader, higher, and far deeper sense than Protestant orthodoxy has ever dreamed of. The infallible book is the book of nature. The right of private personal interpretation is the right of every individual to go direct to nature, and through nature to nature's God, without the intervention of any medium, save that of his own divine nature, every man being possessed, as the Orientals truly say, of a divine soul, the essential spirit called in India the *atma*, as well as of a human and an animal soul. Only when the seventh or highest principle has been unfolded in man, can he discern spiritual things spiritually, and not until he does so can he answer the riddle of the Sphinx, and thereby destroy all Sphinxes which are mysteries from before his path for evermore. Mysteries are indispensable to childhood, and miracles must of necessity cluster thickly along the way of ignorance; but let the light of knowledge dispel the gloomy night of ignorance, and the realm of mystery becomes necessarily smaller, while facts explainable in the light of ascertained laws of nature multiply and increase in power and dignity on every hand. Miracle (derived from the Latin verb *miror*, which signifies to be astonished, or to cause astonishment) is not an improper word, and as a word it will no doubt have definite meaning in the lexicons of the future. Everything is a miracle or mystery to us, *i. e.*, it causes us surprise, and fills us with wonder, often with awe, until we comprehend the law which regulates the occurrence, rendering a singular and most unlooked-for phenomenon amenable to a law of

being. Law is everywhere the expression of intelligence. There can be no law without intelligence, and no intelligence without law. Will is the great motor power in the universe. In your own lives, whatever you are constantly praying for, you are literally to obtain, because you are constantly willing it to you. Asking in faith, nothing wavering, is exercising your will power unfalteringly and continuously; and while every good and perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of alteration, there is infinite truth in the trite old proverb, "God helps those who help themselves." It is in the spiritual precisely as in the material world, we must work for what we win; we can only enjoy the fruits of labor, and though materially many persons get anything but their just deserts; in spirit-life, where you have only what your own spiritual development causes you to accrete to you, you will have little reason to complain of the sorrows and injustice endured below, as in the realm of spirit all is judged by effort, and results; if in a brief span of earthly experience of the sharpest and bitterest kind, you have endured, what seemed to you, while passing through the trial, almost an eternity of unmerited anguish in that seething cauldron of affliction, you will but have developed the royal prerogatives of your spiritual being, and accelerated your progress to that celestial condition of unmingled felicity, where spirits may still have much to learn, but have no longer need to suffer, as suffering has wrought in them its perfect work, and they are, morally speaking, perfect, entire, lacking nothing. The doctrine of everlasting progress for the human spirit is not inconsistent with the idea we have just put forward; though at first sight, and to careless hearers, it may appear so. Wisdom is infinite; we may be learners through eternity, and still be perfectly happy while in constant acquisition of knowledge. We may be always rising higher, always making some fresh discoveries of truth, always mounting

as on eagle's wings nearer to some supernal goal, which evermore eludes us, as the higher we rise the more conscious we become of the infinitude of the heights above us. There may be always room for hope among the stars which deck celestial firmaments; moreover, learning will be a pleasure, not a pain, delightful activity, not painful labor. Thus the two ideas of constant work and perpetual rest may each be fully verified; for happy rest is not idleness, and truly blessed and continual work is anything but harassing and wasting toil.

When the riddle of the Sphinx is answered, rest and work are one; the brain and the heart alike are satisfied, intellect and affection join hand in hand, and walk together through earth and heaven as a wedded pair, whose perfect connubial blessedness makes one into two, and two into one, as Swedenborg endeavored to explain in his exquisite disquisition upon the loves of the angels. Duality is natural to all life, from the atom to Deity. All life is dual, and this duality produces a trinity, as the fruit of marriage is a constant stream of life proceeding from fatherhood and motherhood. There was nothing unnatural in the original idea of God and the angels, as set forth by the Egyptians in the far-off past. Osiris, the father, and Isis, the mother, produce Horus, the child. Every sun, every planet, every constellation, according to the old solar religion, was ruled by an indwelling divinity, who appeared as the guardian angel of the orb; and when the worshippers at Memphis, or at Heliopolis, turned their eyes toward the glorious luminary of day, and prayed to power above them three times daily, at sunrise, noon, and sunset, they did not address themselves to matter, but to the spiritual powers whose presence they felt most nearly when the light first broke in upon them, and aroused them from their slumbers; at mid-day, when the fullest glory of the light was manifest; and again at evening, ere one bright luminary withdrew behind the clouds; only that human eyes, no longer

overpowered by his intense brightness, might be able to perceive the "lesser lights," which, though in themselves often a million times greater, appear to human eyes but small and feeble on account of the immense distances which intervene between them and the earth. So does true greatness, matchless beauty of spirit, surpassing dignity and unfoldment of intellect, appear small, mean and poor to those who are accustomed to the glare and glitter of what is nearer to their own level. The ordinary man of to-day finds his deity in the sun which shines immediately, and from no such immense distance, upon the world of matter in which he lives and moves and has his constant being in thought and in desire, as well as in outward action; while the man of higher aspirations and more poetical nature may find his idea of deity best portrayed in a far distant Alcyone, a sun of much greater magnitude, of immeasurably greater influence through space, but apparently smaller and weaker from the standpoint of earth, because so far removed from the immediate concerns of earthly toil and business.

The celebrated teachers of Egypt, those who gave to the world a religion that was scientific, a science that was religious, and a philosophy that was both, seem to have placed the Sphinx so near the pyramid which contains the solar solution of the greatest problems of the universe approachable by man, in order to induce all coming generations who should encounter that majestic, and yet awe-inspiring and not altogether beautiful image, to pause awhile, and ask why, in a land where there are so many traces of the highest art and deepest culture, has there been for so long, and is there still, such deep and awful degradation? The few indeed who were truly initiated in spiritual wisdom, and framed their outward lives in accordance with their interior enlightenment, were saved from all the awful consequences of corruption and degradation which overthrew what was once the greatest and most civilized country on all the earth. The

Sphinx represents, first, Egypt in her pride and glory, when she was truly great, and when purity, morality, and spirituality reigned supreme, making all intellectual attainments and physical pursuits subservient to the soul ; then in a broader and more universal sense by far, the Sphinx is an emblem of life itself, and applies its teaching to every human being, from the lowest to the greatest, who has ever trod the earth, and to every disembodied spirit in communion with mankind, from the darkest dweller on earth's threshold, to the purest angel ministrant who wings his way from the brightest spheres overshadowing the earth to the heart that yearns for heaven-born light and sympathy, no matter whether that heart beats beneath a robe of lace or velvet, a coat of skin, or a rag that barely hides a beggar's nakedness. The Sphinx is the actual symbol of the true relations of man and woman, reason and intuition, affection and intellect, commerce and art, science and religion. Let us first consider briefly the true relation of the lion of masculine strength and vigor, to the affection and intuition of woman, depicted in the face of the image. We will first remark that we regard as entirely erroneous a great many ideas of man and woman, and of sex in spirit, which are put forward, not only by orthodox churchmen, but by Spiritualists of certain schools of thought ; it will then be our purpose, during the next few moments, to present to you plainly, and as briefly as possible, in concise language, our attitude with regard to sex in spirit. We must for a moment carry you back to a few ancient sources of information, to do away if possible with certain popular misconceptions of the true relation of the sexes culled from ancient authorities, who have been misquoted and falsified to serve the ends of a domineering priesthood and legislature, composed exclusively of members of the male sex, who, in order to continue in power and sweep all obstacles out of their way, have debased woman, trampling her virtue in the dust, depriving her of

the culture freely accorded to her brothers, and maintaining that because of her sex she could be nothing more than a tool in the hands of man,—her rightful position being at man's footstool. We do not agree with much that Paul has written on man's supremacy and woman's subserviency; though marvellously convinced of spirit presence shown to him when journeying from Jerusalem to Damascus, armed with authority from the high priests and rulers of the people to bring the heretical Essenes, who were the true primitive Christians, followers of Jesus, bound to Jerusalem, that they might be made to recant, or else suffer the confiscation of their goods, the loss of their liberty, and even a cruel death itself, if they would not either become orthodox Jewish formalists, or else bow down to the gods of Rome; though Saul of Tarsus, as he was then called, became a medium and a Spiritualist while on that eventful journey, he never wholly lost his old fiery, domineering, masterful spirit. If he could no longer act as the emissary of powers bent on exterminating heresy, he would himself become a powerful heresiarch, and bid these persecuted people to look to him as their especial leader, compelling them to submit in all things to his authority. Ernest Renan proves from the New Testament itself that the character of Paul was haughty and overbearing. His redeeming traits were zeal and earnestness, indomitable courage, and so great an amount of will power that he could overcome almost supernatural impediments, and revive after afflictions which would have crushed any ordinary man years before Paul even showed signs of weakness. Paul must not be judged by any modern standard, if we judge him at all, except by such a standard as that which you are in fairness compelled to set up when you try the case of a singularly bold, intrepid, and self-opinionated man, who has besides his own arrogant will and immense love of power, to contend against difficulties, dangers, and annoyances impossible to overestimate. He was certain-

ly a reformer, a troubler of the waters, one who had a mission, and who was faithful to the light which shone upon him. But in spite of his raptures, and his ecstatic flights of spirit, even into what he terms the third heaven, where he sees and hears things impossible to describe on earth, he never gets over early training and the force of youthful association.

In judging of Paul's position on the question of woman's rightful place, either in the church or home, we must carefully discriminate between his views as an inspired apostle, and his prejudices as a proud and prejudiced Pharisee. He declares that he belonged in youth to the straitest sect among the Jews, and was a Pharisee of Pharisees. Now, as the Pharisees were always the most influential sect of Jews, until very recently, when *progressive* Judaism is becoming the most acceptable to influential and educated Israelites; we need not wonder at Paul's position. Go into any strictly orthodox synagogue to-day, and mention women taking part in the public service, and they will open their eyes with horror and dismay. Men alone may preach, sing and pray. Men may fill the best seats, and approach the ark containing the sacred scroll of the law, even though sometimes their hearts are anything but pure, and their hands anything but clean; while women, because they are such, no matter how clean and pure they may be, must sit apart, screened in a gallery, or in some seats partitioned off from others, as it would be profanation of a holy place to allow woman's foot to tread on the most holy ground. Such Pharisees have lost the original beauty and purity of Jewish thought and worship. They have departed most radically from the customs of the days of Miriam and Deborah. They have introduced a clause into their service which is entirely barbarian, and which all progressive Israelites repudiate and scorn. When they thank God so complacently and self-righteously that they were not born women, they may but be cultivating the spirit of a Dives, which

in the life to come will make them as desirous of being equal with the womanhood they despised on earth as the rich man in the parable was envious of the condition of the beggar, who was beneath his notice ere he left the mortal plane. Paul, who forbids woman to speak, is a Pharisee whose early prejudices cling to him even after his conversion; and prejudices clung to him just as they clung to Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, and hosts of other reformers, who appeared long after his day, and who, while effecting reformation to a certain extent, became as bigoted and intolerant in the days of their power, as were the societies who thrust them out because of their opposition to the old prevailing forms and doctrines of theology. In another light, the attitude of Paul towards woman may, by his apologists, and such partisans of his as stand up for him in all things, whether he be right or wrong, be construed into his desire to protect women from needless insult and exposure to danger, and, at the same time, to protect the churches he had founded, or over which he had a care, against the disturbances which "lewd women of the baser sort" often created in assemblies into which they could force an entrance as speakers. Such women, according to many commentators, molested the primitive Christians and called forth Paul's rigorous charge against women as ministers, much as the Sophists annoyed the Greek philosophers. But to appeal to Genesis in support of the anti-woman suffrage movement, is to appeal to a document which distinctly teaches, both in plain and allegorical language, the absolute natural equality of man and woman, in the days of their first appearance upon earth. Gen. i., ver. 27, says, "And God made man (mankind) in his own image; in the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them." The old pronoun in the original Hebrew undoubtedly had a dual significance, meaning he and she, and it is an imperfection of the English and other modern languages, that there is no such pronoun in the languages commonly

spoken among civilized people to-day. The second chapter of Genesis is evidently an allegory, and there we find a woman spoken of as being made from one of Adam's ribs. She was, if the allegory be regarded as a literally correct account of the origin of men and women, which it certainly is not, formed later than man, and therefore is a superior being, instead of an inferior; for, however much dispute there may be between geologists and theologians, however much Genesis and evolution may apparently conflict, Genesis, as well as science, teaches that the higher forms of life were created after the lower, so, if woman be the latest type created or produced by evolution, then woman is actually man's superior, a higher being, more fitted to survive than he, and legitimately his ruler, not he hers. Let us look at the matter from a plain, common-sense standpoint. Let us study man and woman, and watch them in their mutual relations, and we shall soon perceive that, given equal educational and other advantages, women can be as intellectual as man; while, when her baser passions are aroused, she can be as cruel and pitiless as he.

Education, surroundings, and mode of life, have tended to create artificial distinctions between man and woman. Remove these causes of outward difference, and we shall soon see no essential difference between man and woman, either in morals, intellect, or power of physical endurance. We incline very favorably to Plato's idea of the soul. He it was who said that the spirit of man was only one-half a soul, while the spirit of woman was the other half. When true spiritual marriage occurs, the halves unite, and one perfect being is formed from two imperfect ones. If any truth at all be enshrined in that idea, then all notions of sexual inequality must be groundless and fallacious. If man were all intellect, and woman all emotion, then one could never be a helpmeet for the other. But if both be at the base of their being equally intellectual and emotional, then we can conceive of celestial bliss accom-

plished through the making of the two into one, as it will consist in the intellectual nature of the one complementing the affectional need of the other, and vice versa.

Masculine and feminine elements are indispensable to the building of a great and perfect character. A man is braver instead of less brave, when he is gentle and affectionate, than when he is hard and callous. The bravest soldier is he who can readiest shed a tear at sight of a comrade's suffering. The most powerful intellects are only rendered sublimer when they are coupled with tender feeling and intuition. The form of a Hercules would only be rendered manlier, and far more beautiful, if all the love depicted in the countenance of Venus, or all the sympathy and spirituality of Mary, shone out through the dauntless eyes. Venus can lose none of her fairness if she borrow intellect from Minerva. Christ can lose none of his spirituality if he borrows strength from Hercules and beauty from Apollo. The highest art, the truest reason, the deepest affection, alike demand manliness and womanliness combined, in the persons of whoever shall depict humanity at its highest and best on earth, or in the realm of spirit. Woman, we are often told, is not fit to go to war, and cannot be a defender of her country. This is untrue, as some of the most striking examples of heroism on the battle-field are examples of woman's valor. Have you never read of Joan of Arc, a fragile girl, a child in years, who headed the French troops, and commanded them more skillfully than any of their generals. True, she was inspired ; she was a medium, and worked out the purposes of higher beings than herself ; but her woman's form endured the hardships of the siege, and bore the strain of battle equally with any man's. Have you never read of the siege of Carthage, when the Carthaginian women made ropes of their long, luxuriant hair, and worked like galley slaves to defend their city, bearing the fatigue as well as any men. Have you never remarked how in Norway, Sweden, and some

parts of Germany, and other places in Northern Europe, women carry the heaviest burdens, work on the farms, and expose themselves to every inclemency of the weather, and excel in out-door work as well as men? Even the fashionable lady who follows the hounds often proves the fallacy of the assumption that woman's physical strength would give way under the severe strain which taxes man so heavily. Bring up any stout, healthy boy and girl together; expose them equally from the cradle to rough work and rough weather, and you will find that if they are required to do it, and trained for it, women can do as much laborious work as men; but when brought up differently, woman exhibits in her physical conditions the results of opposite training and habits of life. Take woman intellectually, and contrast her with man,—woman, when undergoing preparations for the learned professions, solves all her problems by the same rule as man employs in their solution. Young women at Vassar can pass examinations full as rigid as those young men must undergo at Harvard. Woman as an author can write as George Sand or George Eliot, and no one will know they are not reading the effusions of a masculine intellect. Mr. and Mrs. Browning were poets together, and their married life was one of great happiness and mutual admiration, and we might quote numberless similar instances.

Woman can be a political economist, and, in the person of a Harriet Martineau, distinguish herself in the field of letters, as highly as any man who has essayed the same branch of labor. There are no evidences that men and women are not intellectually equals. Do we want brilliant thinkers, capable of deciding the affairs of state? Where shall we find a French statesman with clearer head and deeper insight into political affairs than Madame Recamier, or Madame De Stael? Do we want mystical, sensitive, dreamy women, who, in purely intuitive ways, apprehend truth through the soul, rather than

through either sense or intellect? We may instance Madame Guyon, whose mind was intensely feminine in these respects; but she it was who contributed most liberally to the influence which Fenelon exerted by his wonderfully strong and effective preaching. Do we wish to find examples of intuition, of moral excellence, of kindness, even softness of heart, in great men, as well as in great women? We shall find from where history commences, until the present hour, these qualities have never been the sole possession of either sex, but have been distributed almost equally in both. We utterly ignore sex in mind, in art, in literature, in government, in politics, in labor; we believe the only just course to pursue is to give every child a fair chance to become whatever his or her own inherent powers can enable him or her to become. It is to us a matter of total indifference whether a physician, lawyer, preacher, or government official is male or female, young or old, black or white. Qualifications should alone be inquired into. All laws enforcing sexual inequality are, to us, infamous. They are sins against nature, and demand instant repeal. The era of modern Spiritualism was heralded by the mediumship of three little girls, mark ye, not boys. 1848 was alike the year of the Rochester Knockings, and the holding of the first Woman's Rights Convention in the United States, and though some suffragists (indeed many) do not see it, they will ere long be forced, by the superabundant testimony which will be furnished to attest the fact, that modern Spiritualism, which can alone interpret the riddle of the old Egyptian Sphinx, has done more than all other agencies combined to advance the cause of woman's emancipation and recognized equality with man before the law, in America and every other land.

The churches are still in the main the bitterest opponents of woman's suffrage. Clergymen are, as some noble woman has recently declared pretty plainly, the most relentless foes which public-spirited women have to

encounter. There are some noble exceptions, but as a class the Christian ministry is in deadly opposition to the rights of women; while from March 31, 1848, until the present, Spiritualism has been woman's friend and supporter; and the spirit world has chosen many of its best and most royal instruments from the ranks of the sex improperly called the weaker. Certain sacred and most important duties devolve on woman, which man can never perform; functionally, there is a distinction between one sex and the other. The woman who would neglect her children to orate in public is not a true woman; but a woman's own conscience, and her own intuitive sense of the fitness of things, as well as her reason, must decide for her her duty, as man must decide for himself in what path duty requires him to walk.

Having thus boldly announced ourselves believers in the equality of man and woman, we must now turn our thoughts, though very briefly, to the true relations of science and religion, intellect and emotion, art, and the practical things of life. Allow us to say, that though we are earnest sticklers for definite meanings being attached to every word employed, we hate narrow meanings, and therefore refuse to employ terms in a partial, contracted sense, which is a lowering of language, subserving no useful end. Science comes from the Latin verb *scire*, to know. A scientist is properly one who knows; therefore science must be knowledge. Now, religion, derived from *religio*, to bind, implies a recognition of a moral sense, of a line of duty, of mutual obligations, of a universal law which all must obey, and by which all are bound. Science and religion are truly one. Science may discover law, while religion may insist upon obedience to it. In a moral sense, a priest may be most irreligious, and an infidel highly religious. The morality of Col. Ingersoll is rarely called in question, even by his bitterest opponents, while the church admits she has many black sheep in her fold, who, though attending to every ordinance,

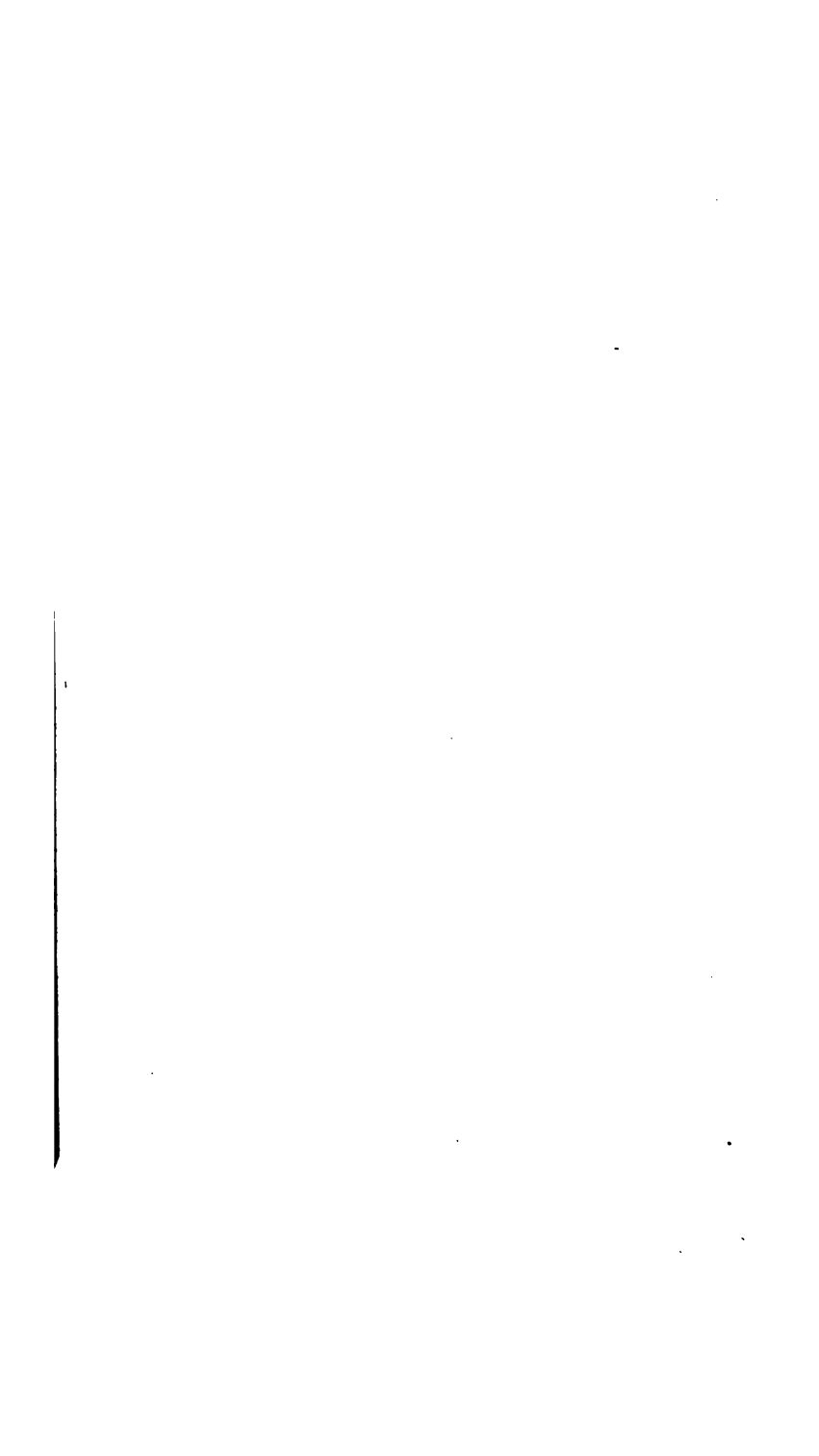
give scandal by their lives, and thus bring what is popularly termed religion into disrepute. Material science needs not to be set aside, but to be supplemented by a true theology, which is, according to a correct definition of the word, the science of divine or spiritual things, as much as geology is the science of the earth, astronomy the science of the stars, botany the science of plants, etc. Now, science can never be idle guesswork or speculation; science can have no fellowship with superstition. Theology, pure and simple, must be made up of well-attested facts relating to man's spiritual nature. True Spiritualism is a trinity in unity. It is a science, a philosophy, and a religion. As a science, it is a self-proving theology. It constitutes a definite and practical revelation of spirit-life, both in embodied man, and among spirits who have cast off the mortal coil. Mediums, and their gifts of intercourse with the spirit world, are the true professors of the science and the instruments employed in ascertaining fact. A mediumistic gift is like a telescope revealing a new star, or a microscope revealing wonders in a drop of water. Stars exist whether you have telescopes or not; but without a telescope and a good strong one, there are many you can never see; so spiritual realities are all about us, mediumship is the glass through which we see them. We plead that children be educated naturally; we claim that there are children who only need freedom to enjoy angelic tutelage, and they will be educated in seminaries you do not see, and by professors whom you do not see, to reveal truths which man in his present condition can receive only through these channels of communication between the spiritual and material realms of being. Education is necessary to mediumship, but what is education? Literally, the word means unfoldment, either the unfoldment of latent truth, or principle, or the unfoldment of capacity to receive instruction. *Educere*, the Latin verb from which education is derived, means to lead forth, and thus means any-

thing but the ordinary cramming, which is the popular substitute for genuine education. In the east, in olden days, children designed for the prophetic office were educated entirely by agencies invisible to sense. A school house and a teacher often exist where your eyes utterly fail to perceive them, and of a far higher quality than those you have on earth around you.

External education is valuable, as it helps one to acquire a mastery over language, and to acquire information concerning historical facts, about which there can scarcely be two opinions. No one can be too well acquainted with actual facts, or be acquainted with too many; but such acquaintance with fact in no way biases the mind, or prevents it from responding readily to spiritual influence. We are all agreed that the Declaration of American Independence was signed July 3, 1776, and no genuine inspiration would ever be impeded by a child or grown person knowing that Washington, Paine and Jefferson were prominent men in that day. No one's inspirations can be impeded by a knowledge of how to keep accounts correctly. At the same time, a perfect knowledge of external history, and of the management of worldly business, is not imperative in a spiritual teacher. You would not ask a man to be your bookkeeper because he was an excellent florist; would not choose a prima donna from the opera to teach arithmetic or algebra because of her fine vocal powers and imposing stage presence. We ought to recognize in mediumship, as in regard to all other things, that a spiritual teacher or revelator fills an unique position that no one else can fill, or, could others fill it, there would be no crying need for inspiration at all. For public speaking before large audiences, purity of diction, perfection of grammar, and a large vocabulary are desirable; but often with no pretensions to oratory, a speaker can pronounce home truths, which, clothed in simplest language, and though spoken with a pronounced brogue, or dialect, carry conviction

to hearts which the eloquence of a Demosthenes, or the style and finish of a Cicero, would probably leave untouched. The spiritual side of nature can be developed independent of either the intellectual or physical ; as one bodily sense can be developed without a correspondent development of others. A blind person may hear accurately, and a deaf person enjoy unusually good eyesight, while in not infrequent instances the loss or absence of one faculty positively sharpens and stimulates another. Wherever there are excesses there will be corresponding deficiencies. Extreme superstition develops extreme iconoclasm ; extreme ritualism is counteracted by plainness in forms of worship. Blind faith is offset by bold denial of everything spiritual, and such will be the state of things until the riddle of the Sphinx is practically interpreted by every individual, and by every nation. The riddle is simply this : how to equalize our powers so that we have no excesses and no defects. The Sphinx, when interpreted, solves the problem of evil ; nothing is evil in and of itself ; good inheres in all things ; good is alone eternal ; evil is good out of place ; too much of the lion will make men tyrants, and ferocious ; too little will make them weak-minded and cowards ; too much effeminacy deprives life of its masculine vigor, the strength of character which is indispensable to a perfect life ; too much virility makes its possessor coarse, sensuous and domineering. The goal of life is the finding of a perfect equilibrium. Phrenology has gone some considerable distance on the road towards solving the riddle of the Sphinx ; there was a time when people usually thought (and many think so still) that certain proclivities of human nature were positively evil, and must be wholly eradicated, or man could never become perfect. This is an utter fallacy, an unqualified mistake. We do not want our old natures taken away, and new ones given us in their stead. We only need to understand our natures as they are, and rightfully subordinate one part to another,

that all the faculties with which we are endowed may sing as a great chorus in perfect harmony,—one group of faculties being, for instance, the sopranos, a second the altos, a third the tenors, and a fourth the basses. Acquisitiveness makes people steal when immoderately developed; but without it no one could learn or acquire anything; combativeness and destructiveness make some persons pugilists, and even murderers; but were these organs totally absent in any, such persons would lack energy and force, and be simply intellectual and moral pigmies, so sensitive to everything as to have no stamina or resistory power of their own at all. Without amativeness no one could be a libertine; but were it totally removed affection would go with it. Veneration, ideality, and sublimity are often largely developed, together with marvellousness in extremely fanatical and superstitious people; but were these absent, there would be no conception of higher things than those purely sensuous. The great question for us all is how we can attain symmetrical unfoldment. In the highest life the prosaic, the practical and the ideal are one; poetry and romance dignify and gild common labor, and the intellect bows at the shrine of the soul, while the senses yield gladly to the reason that rules over them. Learn to unite reason and conscience, poetry and practice, the ideal and the actual, in all your daily lives, and you have solved the riddle of the Sphinx, and can henceforth walk on earth as angels.



LOOKING BACKWARD AND LOOKING FORWARD.

THIS evening being the occasion of our last lecture in this season's course of Sunday work, before taking leave of our audience here, prior to the commencement of work in the far West, we shall ask you to devote a short time to the double duty of reviewing the past and forecasting the future. We are often reminded of such sentences as "Let the dead past bury its dead," and "Forgetting those things which are behind, reach forth unto those things which are before," and we can well sympathize with those who deem it advisable to put the past entirely out of their thoughts, meditating only upon the new days which are dawning and the new hopes which are blossoming in their hearts. "All before us lies the way," "the new transcends the old," are not only poetic expressions born of the vivid imagination of those who court the Muses, they are the sober utterances of common sense; they embody the truest prophecy and the soundest ethics. Looking back as Lot's wife looked back may have converted her into a pillar of salt, a symbol of warning and also of purification. But however much good she may have done as a pillar of witness, it was her husband, Lot, who, by pressing steadily forward, attained to Zoar, the city of safety.

Retrospect surely has its place; reminiscences and recollections, fond memories tenderly cherished in the heart's very core, are salutary when they help us to profit by the lessons past experiences have taught us, but we must never look back to repine because of vanished treasures; we must never permit ourselves to feel discouraged because the roseate tints of our morning sky of earthly existence have faded into the pale grey tints of a

cloudy afternoon ; for whatsoever be the condition of our life at this moment, it is a state that cannot be improved, though it may be rendered well nigh insupportable by contrasting it with the brighter glories of a buried morn. Let us learn the lessons the shadows as well as the sunlight can teach us, and if some passages in our past career have been fruitful only of sorrow, if the remembrance of certain episodes can cause us only pain, we must take the nightshade and the willow culled from the cemeteries where many an ardent hope lies entombed, and learn from these plaintive blossoms in life's garden the lesson of contrast, of shadow, of the sombre background of life's picture, were it not for which the splendid foreground would be scarcely discernible.

Nature, in her external moods, is a reflection and expression of the spirit within ; those who turn from written records to the pages of Nature's ample volume are only turning from the smaller to the larger book of God. We cannot trace the history of the earth or any portion of it without perceiving, almost at a glance, how universal are the contrasts which liken the history of the planet to that of the life of mankind. Where is the mountainous district noted for the height and grandeur of its elevations where the valleys are not correspondingly deep? The very height of the mountain is the cause of the depth of the valley. In the tropics, where there are no excessively long nights, there are no very long days. At midsummer, as well as in midwinter, day begins at six A. M. and ends at six P. M. ; but in the most northerly parts of the earth, where the sun does not appear for months at a time in winter, it never sets for months in summer ; and there, where the long, dark wintry days are unlighted by even the feeblest solar ray, the magnificent *Aurora Borealis*, never witnessed in warm climates, more than compensates for the lengthened darkness.

By a little close inspection we find that things are not as unequally balanced in this world as you may suppose.

It is true that in the Northern States you have not the balmy zephyrs, spreading palm trees and luscious fruits of a more southerly clime ; but then you have not the centipede, the tarantula, the rattlesnake, and other poisonous and offensive creatures, born of the heat and vapors, without which such luxuriance as that of the tropics is not produced. The spice islands or Ceylon may offer sweets that England can never boast, but the boa constrictor and the anaconda must be weighed in the balance with the fruits and flowers. Bishop Heber was incorrect when in speaking of the islands of the southern seas he exclaimed, "every prospect pleases." It does not ; and many there are who would far rather endure the sterility and biting cold of Lapland or Alaska, and enjoy immunity from the terrors of the equatorial regions, than bask in every southern luxuriance, with the constant fear of a serpent's bite hanging like the sword of Damocles suspended as by a single hair above them.

There is vastly too much unreflecting complaint in the world ; vastly too much enviousness and grumbling discontent, resulting from a failure to take in a sufficiently wide horizon ; and as this lamentable fact spreads anarchy, confusion and wretchedness wherever a repining spirit is fostered, we may well conclude the special demon to be exorcised in the world to-day is to be cast out only by a vigorous crusade against the gall and bitterness of human discontent. But it may be asked, and that wisely, Is there not a divine discontent ? Is it not our duty to be dissatisfied with everything short of perfection ? Are we to content ourselves with the platitudes of complacent resignation to our lot when stern duties demand of us our hands, and brains, and hearts ? Are there not conditions to be bettered, wrongs to be righted, miseries to be overcome ? And is not the feverish unrest of to-day, even in its most sanguinary and nihilistic forms, the very weapon employed by the Almighty to set matters straight ? Is not society out of joint ? Is it not afflicted with a

deadly malady? and are not those who rebel against things as they are, the chosen leaders, destined to escort humanity into a promised land, flowing with milk and honey, where want and wretchedness are all unknown? In a certain sense, yes. We can no more doubt the purifying effects of a revolution than we can doubt the beneficial results following a tempest. The lightning kills the blight, the thunder clears the air; but it is not the strife or commotion in and of itself that is desirable, for were a storm to continue long enough everything would be destroyed. There is an end in view, an object to be gained, and anything which furthers that object is not only tolerated but accepted joyfully by all who feel the importance of the end to be attained. Take, for instance, those two tremendous conflicts in which this country has engaged—the struggle for freedom in the last century, and the war between North and South in the present. As July 4th or May 30th comes round year after year, you celebrate the praises of the heroes who bled and died for freedom, and in defense of right. Yet many who celebrate the national jubilee and who decorate the soldier's graves favor a non-resistant policy, and use all the influence they possess to dissuade their countrymen from studying the arts of war or trusting in material weapons of defense. Standing armies are a blot on civilization; the study of human butchery is a disgrace to manhood; yet bravery is so great a virtue, valor and courage are so highly esteemed, that from the old Roman days when there was but one and the same word in the speech of the people for bravery and virtue, to the present hour, a brave man and a good man have always been classed together. A coward is rarely upright or moral, while a truly brave soldier is usually an embodiment of integrity and loyalty. Honor and bravery go together; vice and cowardice are close associates. The valor, courage, bravery, loyalty of the hero is what we admire; these qualities have been closely allied with knighthood and

soldiery, and though the old orders of armed knights may be destined to soon pass away, and the troops of soldiers tramping through the country be only remembrances of an effete condition of affairs, those virtues for which we prize the heroes of every age and clime will never pass away; they are part of the eternal word which can never come to naught even though both heavens and earth are changed, and there are new heavens and new earths wherein dwelleth righteousness. The righteousness which is to dwell in these new homes is the phoenix which ever rises, deathless and immortal, from the ruins and ashes of departed dynasties and bygone states of feeling and practice.

To condemn the action of persons in the olden time is foolish; to waste time in condemning ourselves for past mistakes is folly; for the very time and strength we spend in idle tears and vain regrets had far better be employed in working in the present for the future. The Buddhistic doctrine of Karma may be a profound and irrefutable spiritual truth when properly interpreted and understood; but granting that it is so, we have none of us any power over past existences and bygone acts. It is for us to sow such seed to-day that to-morrow's harvest may be of golden grain and not of tares. If the tares are troublesome and aggressive at this moment, they cannot be uprooted by regretting their presence. Sitting down and crying till your eyes are blind will only exhaust your strength; by so doing you will not remove the smallest obstacle from your road. But at the same time it must be conceded that a healthful use of the retrospective faculty does enable one, oftentimes, to see his errors and the cause of them, and, in the light of such knowledge, to avoid the cause of similar sufferings in future. One who indulges in dissipation over night, wakes up with a headache in the morning. If he does not know what gave him the pain, he may again indulge in alcohol and suffer from a repetition of the ailment; but if he

wisely connects the effect with the cause, and sees how one flows from the other, he has learned a salutary lesson. If foolish, thoughtless indiscretion has been the cause of any misery, then that very misery occasioned by it is the way out of it. Physicians constantly confess among themselves their inability to treat certain cases effectually, because they cannot find the cause of the disorder from which a patient is suffering. Clairvoyants and mental healers sometimes fail in their treatment from a similar cause. If you only know what distressed you, and you can find means for avoiding the occasion of offence in future, your prospects of recovery and future immunity from disease immediately brighten ; whereas ignorance and lack of reflection are fruitful causes of much prolonged and aggravated misery.

Probably no one confesses to being quite well ; no one can look back upon work attempted or accomplished, and feel perfectly satisfied with results, because you are all capable of doing better in future ; and were you fully content with past and present efforts, you would make no progress. If there were no dissatisfaction anywhere things would soon come to a standstill. All are capable of doing better than they yet have done, therefore conscience probes them onward ; and the moral sense is not a relentless judge — not an accusing angel, to be feared and dreaded as the servant of the ire of Deity — but, on the contrary, the moral lever, lifting you to nobler heights beyond ; the golden pulley elevating you to the mountain-top, whereon the mercy seat, and not the throne of judgment, is located. Mercy is above, judgment is within. Mercy is the divine blessing, the healing balm, the refreshing dew which falls from the regions of higher intelligence ; while the stings of remorse, the bitterness of regret, and all that can be called either purgatory or hell, arises from within the human spirit. You have no sterner judge to confront than your own dissatisfied conscience — no harsher sentence will ever be passed upon you than

that you pass upon yourselves. It is and ever will be the mission of the higher powers to enact the *rôle* of Good Samaritan, lifting you from your low estate, and making provision for your succor and healing in the place of refuge to which they guide you.

The world compels those who study it to look both ways, behind and before. The angelic state is symbolized in the living creatures of the Apocalypse, who are full of eyes without and within. Could we all see the end from the beginning we should regret nothing and feel pained by nothing; but in imperfect stages of mental growth and spiritual unfoldment, the pangs of discontent are calls to a higher and better life.

No doubt many in this audience have set out in life with high hopes and mighty projects; their ambitions have been great, their talents considerable, their prospects bright; but one by one all their treasures have slipped from them; they have been shorn of health, wealth, friends, and all they counted dear. Perhaps in the experience of not a few the blow seems to have fallen as a punishment for sin; at least it has been the result of their short-sightedness and mistake. This realization of course adds bitterness to loss and makes trouble harder to bear; but even a shadow dark as this hangs over one's career, even when he cannot plead immunity from blame and cannot pose as martyr in his affliction. The past has already yielded up its Dead Sea fruit; if you are now unhappy the ashes are in your mouths. But eternity is before you; stages upon stages in life's journey have yet to be traversed, and if any mishap has occasioned a temporary delay on your journey, the gates of the celestial city are never closed; and no matter how late the traveler knocks at the door, the door will be opened and admit the belated one, even though he arrive centuries after others who commenced life's journey with him. The parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish, is often misapplied. The lesson to

be learned from it is truly the danger of procrastination; but an earthly wedding and a door shut at a certain hour has no reference to eternity, only to a stated period of earthly discipline. Five virgins, we are told, slept before they had earned repose. They had not procured oil for their lamps, neither had they filled the vessels they had carried with them as their wiser companions had done. Not having worked at noon, they had no sheaves at sunset. Their comrades could not give them oil out of their supply, as no one can do another's duty for him. What are termed works of supererogation in the Church of Rome with which saints are accredited are impossible, as no one can do more than he is able, and work to the extent of every one's ability is necessary to perfect spiritual attainment. We are none of us ready for the banquet, none can receive the prize unless his hands are full of sheaves and he has worked all day long in the harvest field. Whenever a period or day of labor draws to a close, and every worker receives his wages, those wages for that day's work will be the results in his own spirit of the industry of the day gone by. The night following the day, passed by some in a banquet hall at a wedding feast, and by others in the cold outside the door, typifies the different condition of mind and the different degree of result in cases where one's best has been faithfully performed and where negligence has been the order of the day.

Many persons entirely mistake the truth underlying the philosophy of what is now termed Mental Healing or Metaphysical Cure, by refusing to recognize the exact nature of the claim made by the intelligent metaphysician, who only declares when you have got rid of all impure thoughts and erroneous ideas, and have attained to a perfect understanding of truth; and when you live up to this truth fully, you will have said good-bye to all aches and pains, and reached a spiritual attitude where pain will be impossible. Such a position is unquestionably a

recognition of absolute spiritual truth ; but as the statement is often couched in the language of abstraction and seldom brought home practically to the understanding of the public, misapprehension of the gravest kind frequently prevails where all would be clear as daylight if teacher and student fully comprehended the nature of the soul and the true relations of spiritual unfoldment to material consequences. All imperfection, liability to disease and death, registers impotence on the part of the human spirit ; it marks the inferiority of the human mind to the forces of nature circulating and operating all round about it. It would be vain to assert that there was no such thing as cold because some one kept warm on a cold day, or to deny heat because some one was cold on the hottest day in summer ; but it is quite possible for mental states to be of such a character as to shield the happy possessor of mental equilibrium from trials and dangers to which others are perpetually subjected. A cork floating on the water, or the exploits of a champion swimmer, cannot annihilate the ocean ; but the water has no terror for him who can rise superior to its crested foam. A blustering gale which brings the ruddy glow of health to the cheek of a stalwart pedestrian, may overturn, bruise and kill a weak woman or a delicate child. The wind is there, and no manly strength has put it out of existence ; but man's strength has conquered in an encounter with it, while weakness yielded perforce to its mightier sway. To those who enjoy a storm, a tempest is not awful ; to those who are strong to resist temptations and overcome trials, neither mortal adversities nor tempting spirits have any existence as terrifying spectres. To those who are proof against disease, protected from it by spiritual armor, diseases and devils do not appear in the light of dangerous foes. Our work is not so much to change things about us as to charge our relation to our surroundings. But as a result of such a change in

ourselves, our influence upon the world around will assist in elevating the status of the planet.

There are many persons who can never see an inch before them. They have no prescience, no prophetic faculty; their practicality is based on a conservative, non-progressive worship of the already attained. If such people are moved to go forward at all, they can only be influenced by reference to history. Their ideals are all in the past; to them the world is moving backward; Eden is behind, Paradise is lost; the Golden Age is a legend of a fairer clime and happier age, but they have no future. No state of mind can be unhealthier than this, and it is to reach those who are so bound up in ancient records any movement is sent with a heaven-inspired message which urges them forward by showing the feasibility of a forward march, as nothing proposed or attempted has not taken place already. All has been recorded and is now a part of history. Buddha or Jesus may, as ideals, be even more than actual characters, but the marvelous stories told of them are both legends of past attainments and prophecies of the yet more glorious achievements of days yet unborn. No ideal can ever be too high, no prospect too enchanting, for the mind of man is so constituted as to be incapable of outrivaling the prospective attainments of the race. We must have the thought, the idea, the mental image, before the outward form. Every architect is in one sense a prophet, so is every poet, every inventor, every painter, sculptor, or artificer. All inventions are perfected in the spiritual realm of human consciousness before they can receive external form on earth.

It is this truth of spiritual causation and involution, palpable to all observers, which alone explains the true relation of mind to matter, and demonstrates beyond the possible fear of successful contradiction the absolute certainty of spirit being the originating cause of all things.

If there cannot even be a new fashion for a bonnet, a cloak, a dress, or any other garment without some brain conceiving a new design, and some fingers sketching out on paper before fabrics are brought together, and an outward result obtained ; if the houses in which you dwell, the instruments on which you play, are all perfected in mind before they assume external proportions, how can there be any doubt but that the soul, or innermost of man, conceives and designs, while the fingers, deftly or clumsily, as the case may be, follow the spiritual architect, and perform their parts, often slowly and imperfectly, in rearing the outward pile. The common expression, such and such things are not practical, is opposed to common sense, for nothing can ever have become practical till it has passed the theoretical and entered the practical stage. As well expect the foetus to become instantaneously the perfected organism, as well declare germination, gestation, incubation, useless and Utopian, and rave over the practical chicken, the practical vegetable, and the practical child, as ignore and deride the theory which gives birth to practice, and antedates practical demonstration. Practice is applied theory ; were there no theory to apply, there could be no practice. Is not the steam engine a practical invention ? Are not the uses to which electricity is now put eminently practical ? Is not the Atlantic cable practical ? Is not the Brookline bridge practical ? You will answer yes, assuredly, because these actualized triumphs of genius, that is, mind, are now working in the interests of manifold commercial transactions. But was there never a time when Stephenson, Watt, Edison, and many another pioneer of mechanical progress, was laughed to scorn by the hyper-practicalists who scorned to give credence to mere theory ? If to-day trains of cars are propelled by steam where fifty years ago the old stage-coach was the only means of transportation ; if steam now causes swift vessels to sail in six days from New

York to Queenstown, when in days not so far distant sails were the only wings, and those most uncertain ones, wherewith to cross the ocean, why should not electricity ere long be applied to trains and vessels to the abolition of steam transit, as gas is fast yielding to electricity as the next motor power in the lighting of houses and cities? And as the uses of electricity are discovered more and more fully, why not accept Vril as the next motor power, and behold in Bulwer Lytton more of a prophet than a romancist? The French Academy some years ago presented Jules Verne with a medal because of the strictly scientific nature of the principles stated and elucidated in "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," and other books so delightful to children, imaginative ones especially, though pronounced trash by many of their seniors who are not wiser, but only colder and partaking less of the glowing ambition and ardor of youth. Before you know it some of your boys will be proving in some degree the practicability of many of Verne's suggestions. Then you will step in your boats as readily as you now employ the steam cars or the ferries.

The next development following upon the inventions of this cycle will be journeys to the moon, and at length to other planets; for with the gradual equalization of the atmosphere surrounding this globe, coupled with a knowledge of how to navigate it, there will be two oceans traversed by swift sailing vessels instead of one. We do not say this will come to be a fact in this century, but a fact it will be sooner or later; and if there be those on earth now who have conceived a plan, but cannot make it work here and now, what is to hinder such from impressing the brain of some sensitive child after they have quitted the mortal frame, so that the inspirations of the geniuses of the twentieth century may be the fulfillments of the hopes and realizations of the wildest schemes of those whom the nineteenth century has pronounced Quixotic and Utopian? Utopia is ahead; the new Eden is before us; in-

dividually and collectively our hopes will be fulfilled. Press on with good courage, never daunted ; first be sure you are right, then go ahead. If such a motto influence your lives, then come storm or calm, cloud or sunlight, the victory is yours, and coming generations, if not the present, will rise up and call you blessed.

Apply this subject as you will, our farewell texts left ringing in your ears are, "With God all things are possible," and "All things are possible to him that believeth." But if according to your faith it shall be unto you, never forget that that is but delusion misnamed faith which is built on selfishness and error. All selfish schemes will come to naught ; all personal ambitions which seek not the universal good of humanity must eventually fail. Those who build upon the rock of persevering industry anything out of harmony with the pure gold of truth must see their work destroyed and they themselves must suffer loss, though every soul is saved at length ; but they who in patience work zealously, unflaggingly for human weal will receive a great reward : the double blessing of their own souls and the reflected radiance of the happiness of others occasioned by their work. To each one of you we apply the motto before quoted, "Be sure you are right, then go ahead." In the confidence of truth no storms can wreck your vessel ; no edifice built on the rock of truth and devotion to it can ever be overthrown, and if the truth beheld to-day, though brighter than that seen yesterday, is still less bright than that to be discerned to-morrow, the only possible means of improving spiritual vision is to employ faithfully *all* the light and *all* the sight now at your disposal.

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